



BRILL

GREEK AND ROMAN MUSICAL STUDIES 5 (2017) 1-17

GREEK
AND ROMAN
MUSICAL
STUDIES

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Is the Idea of ‘Musical Emotion’ Present in Classical Antiquity?

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Abstract

This article investigates to what degree the concept of ‘musical emotion,’ a term coined by contemporary psychology, can be traced in antiquity. Hence, it is necessary to begin by clearly defining ‘music’ and ‘emotion,’ in both ancient and modern understandings. The distinctions between ‘musically induced emotions’ and ‘musical emotions’ strictly speaking, and between the ‘referentialist’ and ‘absolutist’ (or ‘cognitivist’) school in music psychology structure the question. While most ancient theorists believe that the impact of music on the passions (παθήματα) is of pedagogical or therapeutical relevance as it is able to create ethos in the human soul through *mimēsis*, others, similar to the cognitivists, limit its effect to (aesthetic) pleasure. Emotions unique to music are not explicitly discussed by the ancient theorists, although an indirect acknowledgment possibly exists in form of metaphorical descriptions of musical experiences, a certain notion of specifically musical pleasure, and the idea of music’s magical power.

Keywords

music – emotions – ethos – mimesis – psychology – magic

Introduction¹

In the third book of the *Republic* (3.401d), Plato has Socrates say to Glaucon that ‘upbringing² in music³ is most decisive (or powerful), given that both rhythm and melody sink most deeply into the inner part of the soul and most strongly take hold of it.’⁴ This statement comes at a place in the dialogue where Plato is laying out the educational principles for the guardians of his ideal State. While physical exercise shapes their bodies, μουσική is responsible for shaping their souls.⁵ Especially during young age, when their souls are most malleable, they should be imbued with stimuli that form the character that is appropriate and necessary for their leadership in the State. Also Aristotle (*Pol.* 8.1340a22-3) observes that we ‘change our soul when we hear such things,’ referring again to rhythm and melody.⁶ But what is it that happens to the soul when music touches it? In the *Laws* (7.812c), Plato explains that the soul undergoes *passions* (παθήματα) in or through rhythm and melody; with this he seems to mean what today we would call emotions.

The relationship between music and emotions, as obvious as it seems to be, is actually quite difficult to understand; it already engrossed the authors of antiquity, and it still keeps contemporary psychology and philosophy of music engaged in studious research aimed at bringing light into the mysterious power that music exercises on the human psyche or soul, as the ancients called it. But before entering into the question whether the concept of a ‘musical emotion,’ a term coined by contemporary music psychology, can be traced in ancient classical music theory, we should clarify our terminology, for the terms ‘music’ and ‘emotion’ have not been used univocally in antiquity and in our own day.

1 This article is a revised version of a paper presented on January 7th, 2016, at the 147th Annual Meeting of the Society for Classical Studies in San Francisco, CA.

2 Literally: ‘nourishment’ (τροφή).

3 Shorey 1930 translates with “music.” While Emlyn-Jones/Preddey 2013 translate with ‘arts,’ the following specification ‘rhythm/harmony’ shows that Plato here thinks of music in a more specific sense. Barker 1984, 135, simply transliterates ‘mousikē.’

4 κυριωτάτη ἐν μουσικῇ τροφή, ὅτι μάλιστα καταδύεται εἰς τὸ ἐντὸς τῆς ψυχῆς ὃ τε ῥυθμὸς καὶ ἁρμονία, καὶ ἐρρωμένεστατα ἄπτεται αὐτῆς.

5 *R.* 403c-e; cf. also *Cri* 50d; *Ti* 88c; Arist. *Pol.* 8.2.3 1337b24; 8.4.5 1339a23-5.

6 μεταβάλλομεν γὰρ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀκρώμενοι τοιούτων.

Definitions

To begin with ‘*music*’: the problem we have today in defining music centers largely on questions like how we can distinguish music either from noise (for instance, by the particular structure of the musical sound wave) or from spoken language (by the emphasis on pitch in music and timbre in speech).⁷ For purpose of exploring ‘musical emotions,’ I propose considering music to be *organized vocal and/or instrumental sound* (i.e. defined by a set of rules or patterns such as scales, systems, etc., to differentiate it from speech), *as produced and perceived by human beings*.⁸ In order to explore the relationship between music and emotions, it is necessary to isolate it from lyrics (text). Of course, in song and most other vocal forms, both text and melody (and other elements) are intimately united, but only if we try to abstract from any extra-musical ‘message’ can we examine how music on its own influences the emotions.

It is important to notice that separating music from text and movements like dance for the sake of analysis is not foreign to the Greeks. It is true that ‘μουσική’ often comprises more or different things than what the definition just given of ‘music’ describes. In Plato alone it can mean the following: philosophy (*Phd.* 61a);⁹ the art of properly playing the cithara, singing, and dancing (*Alc.* 1.108c-d);¹⁰ the part of education that corresponds to the soul (as opposed to the body) and includes words (meaning stories not sung: λόγοι, μύθοι) (*R.* 2.376e)¹¹ and song (ὥδῃ or μέλος). Song, for its part, is again divided up into

7 See e.g. Kivy 2007; Patel 2008, 86.

8 For a more detailed discussion of the definition of music, see Kramarz 2016, 12-8. The study of common dictionaries and encyclopedias shows that the primary meaning of ‘music’ is applies to human beings while attributing music to animals or other realities is taking ‘music’ in a wider or analogous sense.

9 Philosophy is called ‘the greatest music,’ while writing poetry is the popular (δημόδη) kind; see also the supposed etymology in *Cra.* 406a. In *Ti.* 88c (in conjunction with 47b-e), μουσική seems to be mean ‘harmony,’ as a part of philosophy which, as a whole, keeps the soul in proper motion (πλάττοντα τὰς τῆς ψυχῆς ἀνταποδοτέον κινήσεις, μουσική και πάση φιλοσοφίᾳ προσχρώμενον); LSJ translates the term here with ‘generally *art or letters*.’

10 ἡ τέχνη, ἥς τὸ κιθαρίζειν καὶ τὸ ᾄδεν καὶ τὸ ἐμβαίνειν ὀρθῶς; cf. also *Leg.* 2.655a: ἐν γὰρ μουσικῇ καὶ σχήματα μὲν καὶ μέλη ἔνεστιν, περὶ ῥυθμὸν καὶ ἁρμονίαν οὔσης τῆς μουσικῆς: ‘for in music there are both the dance figures and the melodies/songs, being music about rhythm and *harmonia*.’ Originally, any of the arts corresponding to the Muses could be covered by the term μουσική.

11 That Plato first meant to discuss poetry not sung emerges from *R.* 3.398d; on the other hand, already at 397b-c, ἁρμονίαι and rhythm are mentioned, maybe just referring to spoken pitch and rhythm.

text (λόγος), melody (ἁρμονία),¹² and rhythm (ῥυθμός) (*R.* 3.398c-d). But this latter distinction and the individual discussion of *harmoniai* and rhythms that follows in the *Republic* (and the scrutiny of appropriate text ‘message’ in what precedes) show clearly that Plato here considers the effect of these musical elements by themselves.

The same can be said about Aristotle who, in his eighth book of the *Politics*, discusses the educational value of music in a manner similar to Plato. He defines music as comprising melody- (or song-) making and rhythm¹³ and seems to distinguish μουσική with melody (μετὰ μελωδίας) from ‘bare’ (ψιλή) music, which is usually translated with ‘instrumental.’¹⁴ All of Aristotle’s following treatment is to be understood to be about music as defined above, regardless of lyrics. Expositions of later authors follow the same course.¹⁵

12 Barker in GMW 1.130 n. 18 stresses that an “organised scheme of pitches” is meant, not simply ‘melody.’ Plato’s following discussion of *harmoniai* in the sense of modes seems to confirm this understanding. I still translate with ‘melody’ as a term covering a general musical parameter as opposed to rhythm, instrumentation, or harmony. Unfortunately, since many of the musical terms in ancient Greek are not used consistently with the same meaning, one needs to ponder carefully the meaning in each case.

13 μουσικὴν ὁρῶμεν διὰ μελοποιίας καὶ ῥυθμῶν οὔσαν (8.7.2 1341b23-4). He does not explicitly include dance here, which is mentioned in *Po.* 1447a26-28.

14 τὴν δὲ μουσικὴν πάντες εἶναι φαμεν τῶν ἡδίστων, καὶ ψιλὴν οὔσαν καὶ μετὰ μελωδίας (8.5.1 1339b21). Rackham 1932 translates: ‘whether instrumental or instrumental and vocal music together.’ Barker GMW 1.174 n. 8 *ad loc.* supports ‘instrumental;’ this is also the definition given by LSJ *ad loc.*, but LSJ offers for ‘ψιλός’ also the meaning ‘mere poetry, without music’ (e.g. *Pl. Smp.* 215c), wherefore someone might argue in favor of translating ‘bare of melody = text without song.’ However, the whole context suggests that Aristotle talks about ‘music’ strictly speaking and not about the effect a song may have because of its textual meaning (see the reference to the *harmoniai* later on in 8.5.8 1340a41 or 8-5.10 1340b18). The separation of various musical elements even in artistic practice, each one eliciting its own ἡθὴ καὶ πάθη καὶ πράξεις: ‘*ethē*, passions/emotions, and actions,’ with the same effect (οὔσαι τοιαῦται τὴν δύναμιν), appears also in *Poet.* 1447a25-30; cf. also *Pl. Plt.* 268b with a similar idea (οὐκ ἄλλος κρείττων παραμυθεῖσθαι καὶ κηλῶν प्रावृणειν, μετὰ τε ὀργάνων καὶ ψιλῶ τῷ στόματι τὴν τῆς αὐτοῦ ποίμνης ἄριστα μεταχειριζόμενος μουσικὴν: ‘no other encourages and by charming soothes better, with instruments and with the mouth only, administering the music best for his flock’). Similar reasons and the strong arguments presented by Ford 2004, 320-29, support the much-discussed Susemihl emendation for *Po.* 1340a14, suggesting the consideration of rhythms and tunes without words.

15 Aristoxenus’ remark that the ethos of a musical piece should come from considering the whole and not (only) from its parameters might actually be a certain reaction to such dissecting approaches; see in Ps.-Plu. *De Musica* 32.1142d-33.1143d and Rocconi 2012, 76-81.

Next, we need to clarify the concept of ‘emotion.’ Based on current psychology,¹⁶ I suggest the following definition of emotions as *transient neurophysiological states that arise in response to a conscious or sub-conscious, real or imaginary stimulus* (‘object’) *provided by the exterior or interior senses or by the mind only*.¹⁷ The term ‘emotion’ is to be distinguished from ‘moods’ (affective states, less intense but lasting longer than emotions and without a clear ‘object’), ‘feelings’ (the subjective experience of emotions or moods), and ‘affections’ (a generic label containing all of the above).¹⁸ Typical basic emotions are joy, sadness, anger, and fear. Many models exist to classify the emotions and to subdivide them further.¹⁹

In antiquity, the term most equivalent to ‘emotion’ would be πάθος or πάθημα. Plato distinguishes three parts of the soul: the ‘rational’ (λογιστικόν or φιλόσοφον), the ‘passionate’ (θυμοειδές), and the ‘desiring’ (ἐπιθυμητικόν). We might associate emotions with the passionate and desiring parts since they are both described as opposed to reason.²⁰ In his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle uses a simplified division of the soul into a rational and an irrational part.²¹ The sensations of pleasure (ἡδονή) and pain (λύπη)—on which emotions are based—reside primarily in the sensitive faculty (*De an.* 2.2.413b23–25) but are also interrelated with the intellect (*id.* 3.7.431a1–3.8.432a14). Aristotle offers several lists of emotions in the *Eudemian Ethics* and in *De Anima* and undertakes a more systematic treatment in his *Rhetoric*.²² Most of the later

16 The anthropological continuity of the human species over the past millennia does not suggest a significant difference between antiquity and today regarding the natural processes that underlie what we today call ‘emotion.’ The concept itself is more difficult to compare across times and cultures; see Konstan 2006 and below.

17 The OHME 10 offers this definition: “a quite brief but intense affective reaction that usually involves a number of sub-components—subjective feeling, physiological arousal, expression, action tendency, and regulation—that are more or less ‘synchronized’. Emotions focus on specific ‘objects’ and last minutes to a few hours.” The “focus on specific objects” is a point of debate, as we shall see.

18 Definitions paraphrased from OHME 10. See also Arist. *EN* 2.5.1–6 1105b19–1106a13 who individualizes the states of the soul according to emotions (πάθη), faculties/powers (δυνάμεις), and habits (ἔξεις, to which correspond virtue and vice).

19 See, for instance, Hevner’s ‘Mood Wheel,’ which applies the same to moods and emotions and is used in music therapy: Wigram *et al.* 2002, 57–61.

20 *R.* 10.603a–605b; see also *Lg.* 9.863b: here θυμός is a πάθος or an element of the soul, and is opposed to ἡδονή, thus possibly preparing the Aristotelian distinction of the irascible and appetitive passions within the irrational part of the soul.

21 *EN* 1.13.9–19 1102a27–1103a3.

22 What appears in the table in *EE* 2.3.4 1220b38–1221a12, even if called πάθη, are really ἡθῆ of vices, as Aristotle analyzes the relationship between emotionally provoked negative

authors in antiquity follow these conceptions about the soul and the passions with minor adjustments.²³

However, the attempt to gain a clear concept of how the ancient Greeks (and Romans) defined and experienced emotions is met with complications. David Konstan, reviewing much of the current scholarship on the issue, has called attention to the fact that the general understanding of what emotions are and their precise taxonomy depend on socio-cultural factors and, therefore, is subject to change.²⁴ On the other hand, he concedes that “there are broad similarities between the ancient *pathê* (...) and modern emotions” (2016, 260) as a general human experience. While it is not possible here to demonstrate this in depth, I hope that the definition given above is open and clear enough to identify cross-culturally a specific kind of response to music.²⁵ At the same time, we shall need to keep in mind that the varying nuances within the

states and the virtue as the proper mean. A smaller list of actual emotions appears earlier at 2.2.4 1220b12-14: θυμὸν φόβον αἰδῶ ἐπιθυμίαν, ὅλως οἷς ἔπεται ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ ἢ αἰσθητικῇ ἡδονῇ ἢ λύπῃ καὶ αὐτά: ‘anger, fear, shame, desire, generally those [emotions] that in themselves are mostly accompanied by sensory pleasure or pain.’ It is interesting that Aristotle introduces here pleasure and pain as a common factor in all emotions (in a way already in Pl. *Lg.* 2.653a-b), something which modern psychology calls “valence” (positive or negative: attractiveness or aversiveness of the object of the emotion; for the application to music e.g. *OHME* 608-15). Other lists of passions/emotions in Aristotle can be found in *De an.* 1.1 403a7-8 (ὀργίζεσθαι, θαρρεῖν, ἐπιθυμεῖν, ὅλως αἰσθάνεσθαι / anger, courage, desire, all of sensation) and 1.1 403a17-18 (θυμός, πραότης, φόβος, ἔλεος, θάρσος, ἔτι χαρὰ καὶ τὸ φιλεῖν τε καὶ μισεῖν / anger, gentleness, fear, pity, courage, joy, love, hating)— it is interesting that here he also inquires to what degree the body is involved. For the *Rhetoric*, see book 2, chapters 1-11, followed by a discussion of *ēthē* in 12-7.

- 23 Some Stoics (such as Chrysippus) emphasize more a cognitive side of the emotions or passions as ‘evaluative judgments’ and reject the notion of a tripartite soul, as laid out in Nussbaum 1993, 97-149.
- 24 Konstan 2006. By comparing catalogs of ‘basic emotions’ in multiple authors and analyzing the examples given especially in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, Konstan holds the various socio-logical milieus responsible for the differences in the emotional vocabulary. For instance, the pre-Hellenistic Athenian society “understood emotions as responses (...) to actions, or situations resulting from actions, that entail consequences for one’s own or others’ relative social standing” (id., 40) as opposed to an individual ‘inner state’ (id., 31), which would be the prevalent aspect in defining emotion during Hellenistic or even modern times.
- 25 Konstan (2006, 39) holds that “the feelings inspired by music (...) do not count as *pathē* for Aristotle.” This may be true for the *Rhetoric* but not for the *Politics* where the word ‘πάθος’ is used in the context of music (e.g. 8.5.5 1340a13 or 8.7.5 1342a5), and I would argue that the concept is present throughout the section.

emotional spectrum may generate incongruences between both perception and description of the emotional impact of music in antiquity and today.

We are now prepared to investigate the concept of '*musical emotions*.' This term can be understood in two ways: first, we could call any emotion 'musical' whenever it is triggered by a musical experience (e.g. by listening to, actively producing, or imagining or dreaming of music).²⁶ This occurs, for instance, when people say that they feel happy or uplifted when listening to a tune that they experience as rousing. The expression '*musically induced emotion*' may serve to differentiate this general type from the other usage of 'musical emotions' properly speaking, which refers to emotions that are thought to be *unique to music*, i.e. which occur only if one is exposed to music. There is much debate about whether 'musical emotions' in this sense actually exist, but we need to hold off that question for a moment. Notice that 'musical emotion' does not refer to the cases where music is used to *express* emotion, but to *provoke* emotion. For in the first case, the emotion preexists independently from music and is thought to be translated somehow into a musical 'language;' we are here concerned with the emotions that follow a musical experience as their direct and primary cause.²⁷

Ancient Use of Musical Emotions

Musically induced emotions are an everyday experience both now and then, and are reflected throughout in literary writings; a well-known example is Achilles delighting (τέρπειν) while he accompanies his own singing with the *phorminx* (Hom. *Il.* 9.186-9).²⁸ For the ancient theorist, they are relevant, first, as mentioned above, within the context of educating the young, specifically of character formation, and, second, they are considered for acquiring or restoring a proper emotional state, a procedure similar to what today we call music therapy.

26 This is the definition employed in the OHME, see p. 10.

27 Statistically, the expression of existing emotions is far more frequently reported in accounts of music in ancient literature; see chapter 2 in Kramarz 2016.

28 Admittedly, the literary sources often do not distinguish whether an effect is brought about mainly through the music itself or through the text or the necessary combination of both.

Ethos

In order to describe the kind of emotions to be induced, the theorists employed another related concept that they called *ēthos* (ἦθος). Ethos, in the meaning of ‘individual patterns of being or behavior’ (which are not necessarily moral),²⁹ usually refers to individual people (such as gentleness, irascibility, courageousness, relaxedness, etc.), but can then also be applied to groups of people, animals, and other realities—such as music. Most ancients believed that music forms character by means of habituation, through frequent repetition of the emotional response to music that possesses a specific ethos.³⁰ This leads to the question of how does music acquire ethos, and how can it influence human ethos? Without being able to give an answer with the necessary detail,³¹ here is a brief account of what the ancients thought about it.

Mimēsis

Music as an art form is identified as a kind of *mimēsis*, a term that can range from ‘imitation,’ to ‘representation,’ or ‘expression.’³² Plato is the first known author to bring a pre-existing notion (and practice) of *mimēsis* to the level of explicit theoretical reflection.³³ To give an example from the context of music: ethical qualities of manliness (or courage) and self-control are to be instilled through music that ‘imitates’ or expresses the utterings of someone who shows manliness (or courage) in warfare and endures in failure (*R.* 399a-b).³⁴ It is hard for us to imagine how a melody could possibly resemble such utterings in any

29 “Ethos” is close, but not identical, to what we call ‘character,’ in part because it does not need to mean a stable disposition but can be a simple ‘characteristic’ of something, and also because it would describe only some trait and not all of the character of a person. Some descriptions of ethos are used for virtues or vices, but ethos would coincide with them only when describing human habits that incline positively or negatively towards action. Hence the question whether music disposes to virtue, something which Philodemus vigorously denied.

30 See Arist. *Pol.* 8.5.6 1340a23-29; cf. Aristid. *Quint.* 2.6 63.31-64.9.

31 This is done in Kramarz 2016 where the existing scholarship on the issue is reviewed and updated; see also Barker 2005.

32 The most thorough study of the term and its history, with particular emphasis on Plato and Aristotle, is Halliwell 2002 (who deals with the pre-Platonic development on pp. 17-22).

33 Halliwell calls him the “founding father’ of mimeticism” (2002, 24; see also p. 37) who, at the same time, employs the concept within a large range of contexts and treats it in a quite complex, by no means uniform way.

34 I am summarizing; Plato’s description of the situation is even more elaborate. In Barker’s translation (GMW 1.131), we read: ‘the sounds and cadences of a man who is brave in deeds of war and in acting under pressure of any kind, and who, if he is faced with wounds or

precise way, but the point is that Plato supposes a parallelism between musical structure and ethic-revealing sound or behavior in real life, and that this parallelism transmits the musically expressed ethos to the listener. Aristotle speaks in similar terms when he affirms that the ‘similarities’ of certain music make souls ‘enthusiastic,’³⁵ or show anger, mildness, manliness or courage or self-control and their opposites, or in general, they make people ‘feel along’ (συμπαθεῖς), for ‘songs themselves contain the *mimēmata* of *ēthē*.’³⁶

The fact that our souls are susceptible to music at all is explained by Plato (and in a similar vein by many later authors) in the *Timaeus*: the cosmic and human soul are governed by the same principles, and music, being based on mathematically describable proportions, forms the link between the two. Thus, to music corresponds the role of “tuning” the soul according to cosmic harmony.³⁷ Aristides Quintilianus develops the perhaps most complex theory of how various musical parameters together create specific ethos in the different parts of the human soul. For one part, he endeavors to assign ethical qualities to all musical parameters, even to the individual notes, intervals, modes, melodic styles, rhythms, etc., and finally to the musical piece as a whole. Secondly, he establishes a male-female polarity, on which these qualities are based, and this polarity can also be found in the structure of both the universe and the soul. For Aristides Quintilianus, *mimēsis* is not a simple musical mimicking of extra-musical forms, but an intrinsic equivalency between music, the soul, and the cosmos, through which they communicate in ethos. This nexus provides the paideutic or therapeutic musician with the ability to arrange musical ethos in accordance with the ethos of text, and both according to the ethical needs of each individual. Aristides’ system is perplexing and fascinating at the same time, and we cannot appreciate it here in detail,³⁸ but in its multiple explicit and implicit references to earlier authors of antiquity it constitutes the culmination of a tradition according to which the interior makeup of music creates or influences pathos and ethos in the human being. As we see, there is plenty of evidence that ancient music theorists subscribed

death or falls into any other catastrophe, confronts his fate in all these situations with self-discipline and steadfastness.’

35 ταῦτα γὰρ ὁμολογουμένως ποιεῖ τὰς ψυχὰς ἐνθουσιαστικάς, ὁ δ’ ἐνθουσιασμὸς τοῦ περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἥθους πάθος ἐστίν (*Pol.* 8.5.5 1340a10-12; the following references are from lines 20-21 and 13). It is significant that Aristotle calls ‘enthusiasm’ here a passion (or emotion) of ethos, in other words, an emotion that leads to a specific ethos.

36 ἐν δὲ τοῖς μέλεσιν αὐτοῖς ἐστι μιμήματα τῶν ἡθῶν (*ibid.*, lines 39-40).

37 See Barker 2005, 33-47; 120-8; Pelosi 2010, 68-113.

38 For a thorough analysis of this author and his theory, see Kramarz 2016, 315-48.

to the general concept of musically induced emotions. We may add that in any case the addition of text or other extra-musical elements are certainly capable of specifying the ethos further and of increasing the degree of the emotional impact in a musical piece.³⁹

The Debate about the Relationship between Music and Emotion

However, there are two known ancient authors (the Epicurean Philodemus of Gadara and the Skeptic Sextus Empiricus, along with a brief section (1.13) from the so-called Hibeh Papyrus from the fourth century BC) who deny music any usefulness for education or therapy. Both Philodemus and Sextus Empiricus refuse to acknowledge any specific emotional impact of music that would go beyond the aesthetic experience of pleasure (ἡδονή).⁴⁰ Their position stands as a minority against a mainstream of authors who take the ethical impact of music for granted.⁴¹ It is interesting to notice how these two camps align with two contemporary schools of thought which Leonard Meyer has called ‘referentialists’ and ‘absolutists’: the former claim that music in some way refers “to the extra-musical world of concepts, actions, emotional states, and character,”

39 One could suspect a contradiction in Plato when he attributes to melody and rhythm clear ethical characteristics (*R.* 401d) but elsewhere (*Lg.* 669e) complains about the difficulty to identify the ethos of music without text. However, the context of the *Laws* passage is about confused and corrupted music which, for that reason, lacks clear ethos. What remains true is that identifying exact musical ethos is the task of the musical expert (see *R.* 398d-e; 400a-c; also *Ps.-Arist. Pr.* 19.27 919b36-37), but it does find its ultimate effectiveness in combination with text.

40 A closer analysis of their reasoning reveals that, for the most part, they limit themselves to simply stating that the various supposed effects of music do not exist or should be attributed to the lyrics (text) instead of the music. Their only argument of true substance is the empirical evidence that some who are exposed to music of a specific ethos do not show signs of having assimilated that particular ethos (Hibeh 1.13, lines 13-22; *S. E. M.* 6.15; *Phld. Mus.* 3.11 Kemke = 65 Delattre); for a more detailed analysis, see Kramarz 2016, 275-98.

41 Bonds 2014, 17, draws the lines in a different way, between Orpheus and Pythagoras, by stating that they “embody two fundamentally different perspectives on music that together circumscribe the foundation of Western attitudes toward the art. As a musician, Orpheus demonstrated music’s effect; as a philosopher, Pythagoras explained its essence.” As intriguing as this might at first sound, when Bonds later (p. 22) asserts that “Pythagoras’s explanation of music’s essence was at the same time an explanation for its effect, as realized through the skill of Orpheus,” this relationship of “mutual reinforcement,” his initial distinction does not seem to be as fruitful as the one presented here, which focuses on what kind(s) of effect music can have at all.

while the latter see the meaning of the experience of music only “within the context of the work itself, in the perception of the relationships set forth within the musical work of art.”⁴² Peter Kivy, one of the most pronounced promoters of musical ‘cognitivism’ (which is widely equivalent to ‘absolutism’), holds that music, on its own, cannot arouse ordinary emotions because these emotions depend on a corresponding ‘object’ (or cause) which music does not provide.⁴³ It is certainly true that nobody has a reason to feel literally ‘sad’ just because of listening to a Prelude by Chopin in a minor key, since there are no disappointed expectations or negative consequences for one’s life. The ancient critics of the common view of musically induced emotions did not employ this argument directly. Instead, Philodemus, for instance, claims that it is a fallacy to attribute the change of affective states to music instead of the real cause, which is the text,⁴⁴ or that music can display *ethos* (and, hence, instill virtue) just as little as cookery,⁴⁵ a typical *reductio ad absurdum*. Philodemus and Sextus do not offer much proof for their objections, but their reservations seem, at least in part,⁴⁶

42 Meyer 1956, 1-3; the author notes that this distinction is not the same as “formalist” and “expressionist,” because among the latter, there are “absolute expressionists” who believe that an emotional response to music functions without reference to extra-musical realities, and “referential expressionists” who “would assert that emotional expression is dependent upon an understanding of the referential content of music” (id., p. 3). Reviews and assessments of the most important theories offer Budd 1985 and Davies 2010.

43 E.g. Kivy 1990, 171: “Being moved by music and the descriptions we give of music in emotive terms—sad, hopeful, happy, angry, and the like—are independent phenomena, related only in the sense that I might be aroused to ecstasy by the beauty (say) of a particularly anguished passage in a musical work;” and 194-5: “Music alone is about nothing at all, and the inference from its sadness or joy, tranquility or turbulence, to its ‘aboutness’ a false one. (...) The expressive properties of music alone are purely musical properties, understandable in purely musical terms.”

44 E.g. Phld. *Mus.* 3.64-66, 57, 67 Kemke = 95.29-97.45 Delattre. For Philodemus, something irrational such as music cannot have an effect on a rational moral disposition (virtue) (3.39, 31 Kemke = 83 Delattre). Sextus Empiricus argues that it is philosophy, not music, which restrains the soul’s passion: *M.* 6-7 and 17 (paragraph numbering according to the edition by Greaves 1986). At the most, music offers a distraction but no real change of the mind: *M.* 16.

45 E.g. Phld. *Mus.* 4.3 Kemke = 117.28-35 Delattre. Sextus holds that ethical states such as love or intemperance (in the case of Achilles in Hom. *Il.* 9.186-189) attract certain music instead of the music creating these states (*M.* 19)—actually an implicit (and most probably unintended) argument in favor of musical *mimēsis*: how else would certain states of mind attract specific kinds of music?

46 Other reasons include the specifically Epicurean and skeptical approach to music and science in general.

to stem from a general sense that the connection between *ordinary* emotions and music is not satisfactorily accounted for.

This is not the place to resolve the intriguing debate between these schools,⁴⁷ but one problem that I see in the cognitivist position and which I would like to comment on here is that it does not consider the possibility of ‘musical emotions’ properly speaking.

Specifically Musical Emotions

Most of us would probably agree that the emotional experience of a Chopin Prelude is indeed not quite sadness, and we might call it “sad” simply for lack of a better description.⁴⁸ Kivy does admit the possibility of an emotional response (such as awe) to the beauty of music in its structure or *understood* expressiveness, but according to him, any other emotion is owed to factors extrinsic to music. I venture to disagree and propose that it is possible, based on contemporary research on the various mechanisms that induce emotion through music,⁴⁹ to explore phenomena such as ‘emotional contagion’ for a model of emotions that originally derive from ordinary life experiences (such as ‘tension’ and ‘relaxation’); these experiences reverberate emotionally in musical patterns and thus become ‘musical emotions,’ without requiring ‘objects’ which define the ordinary emotions. Thus understood, musical emotions may be genetically related to, but not identical with, ordinary emotions.

47 Psychological studies have proven “quite conclusively that music does evoke emotions, and that the strong version of cognitivism is thus untenable” (Juslin, P.N. / Sloboda, J.A. in the OHME 83).

48 This lack of vocabulary would explain why also the ancients characterized music in most instances with terms taken from ordinary emotions, which in itself does not disprove that they were sensitive as well to realize a certain incommensurability of those terms. Martha Nussbaum (2001, 249-294) builds her argument in favor of musical expressivity on emotional content that is not necessarily linguistically describable, wherefore music might ‘describe’ emotions even more precisely than language. However, Nussbaum does not consider the concept of specifically musical emotions.

49 See e.g. Juslin in the OHME 619-23. Some of these mechanisms are: rhythmic entrainment, evaluative conditioning (frequently pairing music with other emotional stimuli), visual imagery (visualizations while exposed to music), episodic memory (emotionally charged events of the past linked to music), musical expectancy, and cognitive appraisal (whether music fulfils or not an expected function).

In addition, the enjoyment felt in the aesthetical experience of music in its harmonic beauty could be identified as a source for musical emotion.⁵⁰

Our final question now is whether anywhere in ancient Greek or Roman descriptions or theoretical reflections on music the idea of specifically musical emotions was entertained. As far as the theorists are concerned, their primarily paideutic interest in modelling human ethos does not motivate them to reflect about emotions independently from the ability of music to constitute a *mimēsis* of extra-musical ethical realities. The 'absolutists' Philodemus and Sextus Empiricus could have explored the non-ethical effects of music, had they not limited themselves to ridiculing and deconstructing the usefulness of music as assumed by their adversaries. But there are still other traces of an intuition that the effect of music can transcend its ethical dimension.⁵¹

In literary sources we can observe that the Greek language is particularly rich in the use of characterizations for music that are often metaphorical and borrowed from other senses.⁵² From a host of possible examples, I shall illustrate this here with just a few. The Greek language is capable of providing a great variety of compound terms with the root for 'honey' (μελ-) or sweetness/pleasantness in general (ἡδυ-) which pervade in a special way Pindar's odes⁵³ but are also very frequent in Latin authors (*suavis, dulcis, mell-*).⁵⁴ Other examples could be ἐρατός ('lovely'),⁵⁵ λεπταλέος ('fine, delicate'),⁵⁶ or, on

50 For a more detailed exposition of this model, see Kramarz 2016, 417-39.

51 This is not to say that musical emotions strictly speaking are non-ethical; but insofar as they break up the identification of the musical experience with *ordinary* emotions, their ethos would not align anymore so easily with the characterizations used for musical *paideia* which need to be labeled according to the standards of human ethos (or character).

52 See Kaimio 1977, Rocconi 2003, and the synopsis of terms in Kramarz 2016, 65-136.

53 E.g. *O.* 7.7-8: the poet sends 'nectar' as gift of the Muses, 'sweet fruit of the heart/mind' (γλυκὺν καρπὸν φρενός); then 11-12: ἄλλοτε δ' ἄλλον ἐποπτεύει Χάρις ζωθάλμιος ἄδυμελεῖ θαμὰ μὲν φόρμιγγι παμφώνοισι τ' ἐν ἔντεσιν αὐλῶν: 'Charis, giving the bloom of life, looks upon the one or the other man, often with sweet-sounding *phorminx* or with the all-voiced instruments of the *auloi*.'

54 E.g. *Apul Met.* 5.15.8-10: *Nec tamen scelestarum feminarum nequitia vel illa mellita cantus dulcedine mollita conquievit*: 'And yet the vileness of the wicked woman did not rest softened even by that honey-like sweetness of the song.' Latin, however, displays a much more limited use of compounds.

55 E.g. *h. Hom.* 3.515 or 4.153, 423, 455 (all referring to the cithara).

56 *Hom. Il.* 18.569-71: τοῖσιν δ' ἐν μέσσοισι πᾶις φόρμιγγι λυγείῃ ἱμερόεν κιθάριζε, λίνον δ' ὑπὸ καλὸν ᾄειδε λεπταλέῃ φωνῇ: 'in their midst a boy played with the clear *phorminx* lovely, he sang the beautiful Linos tune with a fine voice.' This quote combines a number of characterizations, underlined.

the unpleasant end, ἐχθρός ('hated, hateful'),⁵⁷ or in Latin, compounds from *horr-.*⁵⁸ Since specifically musical emotions elude precise descriptions, transferring words from other experiences can be taken as an attempt to approximate the various effects of music.

Another concept within which an idea for something specifically musical could be hidden is that it creates pleasure or enjoyment (ἡδονή). Again, literary descriptions abound.⁵⁹ Plato is not oblivious to this fact,⁶⁰ and Aristotle acknowledges music as one of the most pleasant experiences.⁶¹ On the other hand, to my knowledge, neither Plato nor Aristotle or any of the later authors reflect beyond the point of intensity about the *kind* of pleasure which music produces in comparison to other perceptions,⁶² and so we are left for the most

57 A. Th. 870, describing the victory song (παιάν) of Hades, along with the shrieking hymn of the Erinys (τὸν δυσκέλαδὸν θ' ἕμνον Ἑρινύος).

58 E.g. Ov. *Fast.* 4.190: '*horrendo lotos adunca sono* / the bent pipe with terrible sound.'

59 One for many: Thgn. 1.531-3: Αἰεὶ μοι φίλον ἦτορ ἰαίνεται, ὅππότε' ἀκούσω αὐλῶν φεγγαγομένων ἡμερόεσσιν ὅπα. χαίρω δ' εὖ πίνων καὶ ὑπ' αὐλητῆρος ἀκούων, χαίρω δ' εὐφθογγον χερσὶ λύρην ὀχέων. 'It was always dear to me to melt the heart when I hear the charming voice of sounding *auloi*. I rejoice over drinking well and listening from the *aulos* player; I rejoice holding a well-sounding lyre in the hands.'

60 Despite all that is usually considered to be severe and morality-driven censorship in Plato's education system, he actually does not intend to suppress pleasure in music; he only rejects it as a criterion for properly judging music; see e.g. *Lg.* 653d-654a; 655c-d; 802a-dc.

61 *Pol.* 8.5.1 1339b20-21; cf. 8.5.10 1340b17: ἡ δὲ μουσικὴ φύσει τῶν ἡδυσμένων ἐστίν: 'music is by nature one of the sweetest/most enjoyable things.' Aristotle's common sense approach speaks in these lines (*Pol.* 8.5.4 1340a4-6): ἔχει γὰρ ἡ μουσικὴ τιν' ἡδονὴν φυσικὴν, διὸ πάσαις ἡλικίαις καὶ πᾶσιν ἡθροσιν ἡ χρῆσις αὐτῆς ἐστὶ προσφιλέης: 'music dispenses pleasure of a natural kind, so that the use of it is beloved by all ages and characters' (translation Barker GMW 1.174).

62 In *Ti.* 80b, Plato distinguishes ἡδονή as felt in the perception of the polar interplay of musical movements by people who do not think (τοῖς ἄφροσιν) from εὐφροσύνη as felt by those who do (τοῖς ἔμφοσι). This (intellectual) 'delight' is owed to the *mimēsis* of divine harmonies in mortal motions. Whether both reactions (which differ not on the side of music but on the side of the perceiving subject) are specific to music or would be the same in the case of other (non-musical) forms of *mimēsis* remains open; in the first case, we would have a hint to two different musical emotions. I am grateful to an anonymous reader for reminding me of that reference for this context.

Aristotle does mention that senses other than hearing do not transmit ethos or do so only in a symbolic way (as σημεία) but not by themselves as do melodies/songs (*Pol.* 8.5.6-10 1340a23-1340b19). In addition to forming character, music is ideal for education, since by its enjoyment it sweetens up the pedagogical procedure (*ibid.*, at the end lines 15-17); see about the same in Arist. *Quint.* 2.3 55.4-56.5.

part with the general notion that music is simply “enjoyable,” i.e. it predominantly produces emotions of a positive, agreeable kind.⁶³

One last hint at an emotional force of music that otherwise does not exist could be seen in the descriptions of its magical power which at times is unescapable—with the Sirens as its notorious personification.⁶⁴ Here are meant not the instances of miraculous musical power over plants, animals, and even rocks as attributed especially to Orpheus,⁶⁵ but the enchanting or mesmerizing effect that music is often reported to elicit, usually described with verbs such as θέλγειν,⁶⁶ ἐπαοιδεῖν,⁶⁷ κηλεῖν,⁶⁸ or, in Latin, especially *mulcere*.⁶⁹ But also here, musical magic, by its very definition, needs to remain mysterious and without explanation. Furthermore, it is hardly ever clear whether musical magic is imagined to function on the level of emotions or through some other coercive mechanism.⁷⁰ It seems reasonable to surmise, though, that *if* music can be thought to work at times on the emotions in a way that the ancients interpret as magical, it is quite likely that with this they try to describe an effect that is different from ordinary emotional experiences.

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- 63 Examples for not enjoyable music are much less frequent in ancient literature than the positive ones; they are mostly due to a bad job on the part of the musician (e.g. Hor. *Ars* 347-350) or because the musical context already carries a negative emotional charge, such as lamentations, danger, etc.
- 64 The original reference is Hom. *Od.* 12.39-54, 183-198, but the *topos* has been used by many later authors to describe the luring character that music can have, e.g. D.Chr. 32.47; Arist. *Quint.* 1.19 90.27-30.
- 65 A compilation of most of the many stories about Orpheus in previous authors provides Ovid in *Met.* 10.1-105 and 11.1-66.
- 66 E.g. Pi. *P.* 1.12: κῆλα δὲ καὶ δαιμόνων θέλγει φρένας: ‘the shafts [of the phorminx] enchant the minds of the gods.’
- 67 E.g. Pl. *Lg.* 812c, speaking of the παθήματα of the soul affected by good or bad *mimēsis* of songs, wherefore the souls of children should be ‘charmed’ (ἐπάδῃ ταῖς τῶν νέων ψυχαῖς) by good ones.
- 68 E.g. E. *Alc.* 359, wishing to be able to charm with hymns like Orpheus (ὑμνοισι κηλήσαντά).
- 69 E.g. Ov. *Met.* 10.303: *mea si vestras mulcebunt carmina mentes*: ‘if my songs will charm your minds.’ Another vivid expression be cited from Macr. 2.1.5: *puella ex industria supra naturam mollior canora dulcedine et saltationis lubrico exerceret inlecebris philosophantes*: ‘the girl—made up to be more voluptuous than nature intended—would charm them with her sweet singing and lewd dancing while they philosophized’ (transl. Kaster 2011).
- 70 I say “*hardly* ever” because the Plato reference from above (n. 59) does establish a connection between the emotions and “enchantment.”

Conclusion

Our conclusion, then, is that ancient authors did explore abundantly the phenomenon of musically induced emotions, especially for the sake of their ethical implications. Emotions unique to music, on the other hand, did not make it into their theoretical reflection and can at most be conjectured from metaphorical literary descriptions, from an aesthetical experience that appears to distinguish music from other art forms, and from the possibility that the ancients take recourse to the idea of magic because the power of music transcends the ordinary perception of emotion and evades other explanations.

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The Symphony of Temperance in *Republic* 4

Musical Imagery and Practical Models

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Abstract

This paper calls into question a long-lasting but ill-founded tenet of Platonic scholarship, namely that Plato was not interested in, or aware of, the technical implications of the musical concepts he employed in the dialogues. Conversely, I will show how Plato exploited the technical and practical features of the concept of *symphōnía dià pasôn*, and of choral singing more generally, to highlight the unique role played by temperance (*sōphrosýnē*) in the ideal city. More precisely I contend that Plato's musical images, far from being decorative or purely metaphoric devices, enrich our understanding of this ethical notion precisely by means of their technical and performative implications, which were very familiar to the original readers of the *Republic*. Hence musical theory and practice, in addition to being central elements of the cultural context in which Plato's reflections must be interpreted, represent also a repertoire of concepts that significantly informed his philosophical theories.

Keywords

Plato – musical imagery – temperance – *symphōnía* – choral practice – octave – harmonics – Aristotelian problems

The reader of the *Republic* is presented on many occasions with thought-provoking musical characterisations of the most important ethical values of the ideal city: temperance (σωφροσύνη) and justice (δικαιοσύνη), as well as the souls of the individuals who embody these ethical ideals, are repeatedly depicted as being 'harmonious', resembling a symphonic blend of sounds

(συμφωνία) or even a proper ‘tuning system’ (ἁρμονία).¹ Socrates introduces these curious depictions in a very matter-of-fact way, as if describing ethical notions in these terms were only natural. However, why should one think of ethical excellence in musical terms at all? And how do these musical characterisations reflect Plato’s understanding of the social and psychological function of these ethical skills? In order to answer these questions, I will first examine the musical terminology employed in *Republic* 4 to depict temperance and its wide-ranging effects; secondly, I will compare Plato’s usage with Classical accounts of the nature of specific intervals and musical practices, so as to reveal how Plato exploited well-known technical portrayals of these musical concepts for his own philosophical purposes.

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- 1 See especially Pl. *R.* 4.430e1-2, 4.431e7-8, 4.432a8, 4.443d6-e3. Cf. also 3.402b-c, where the hallmark of a true *mousikós* is said to be precisely his ability to recognise ethical excellence (*areté*) in all its forms and appearances. Whenever possible, I will avoid translating the Greek word *areté* as ‘virtue’, because this translation runs the risk of evoking a Christianising conception of virtue as a stable disposition of the soul, a gift which is bestowed by God’s grace and does not necessarily require an active response on the part of the virtuous individual (see e.g. Aquinas, *Sum. Th.* i-ii.55.4). Conversely the nature of the Greek notion of *areté*, which has its roots in the heroic world, is essentially performative and agonistic: it is a kind of ethical excellence that is revealed by, and indivisible from, a person’s actions and, therefore, entails a constant tension and active effort on the part of the agent (cf. Arist. *EN* 2.1103a14-1105a12 and 1.1098b30-1099a30). A similar problem arises in translating the Greek word *sôphrosýnē*, since most modern renderings (e.g. self-control, moderation, self-restraint and so on) evoke an exclusively censorious idea of this ethical skill as the ability to curb excessively intense or unruly emotions (e.g. sexual desire or the overly exuberant behaviour of young children). However, Plato’s conceptualisation of this kind of ethical excellence centres on the well balanced attitude (closer to the original meaning of *σώφρων/σώφρον*, ‘of sound mind’) that results from exercising both this censorious power and the opposite skill to establish a truly harmonious psychological state: in order to be perfectly *sôphrôn*, a person must be able to soothe excessively intense feelings as well as enhance the emotional tone of overly austere spirits (see e.g. *Lg.* 2.665d-666d; cf. also Plu. *Virt. Mor.* 443c-d and 445a, where *sôphrosýnē* is defined as a mean between *anaisthêsia* and *akolasia*). For this reason, I will translate *sôphrosýnē* with the rather old-fashioned word ‘temperance’, which emphasises the ‘intermediate’ character of a soul whose psychological disposition is neither too ‘tense’ nor too ‘slack’ (cf. *R.* 3.410c-412a). Furthermore, the musical overtones evoked by this word make it particularly fitting to reflect Plato’s aim to employ music and its temperaments as a tool to modulate, and not suppress, human emotions.

1 The Choir of Temperance: A Symphony of Natural Differences

The question of what role music should play in the ideal city is introduced for the first time in Book 2 of the *Republic*, immediately after a discussion of the extraordinary psychological nature of the future Guardians of the state: they will have to be ‘aggressive and spirited’ against external enemies and, at the same time, ‘gentle and amenable’ toward their fellow citizens. But how to produce such a paradoxical character, ‘gentle and stout-hearted’ at once (πρᾶον καὶ μεγαλόθυμον ἦθος, *R.* 2.375c6-7)? Socrates turns instinctively to the traditional recipe that prescribed music and poetry for the care of the soul and physical exercise for the body. By the end of Book 3, however, Socrates and Glaucon find out that both music and gymnastics must be practiced primarily for the good of the soul, since they affect the two leading faculties of the *psyché*—the spirited (*thymoeidés*) and the rational (*logistikón*) part—by tending and relaxing them as if they were lyre strings.² So only a person who is capable of harmonising these psychological components with each other can be regarded as a perfectly accomplished *mousikós*, much more than someone who is simply able to tune the strings of an instrument. Still, as Socrates revealed in his earlier examination of some technical aspects of music, this all-important psychological harmony can be gained only through practical mastery of specific modes and rhythms, which have been accurately selected on the basis of the models of ethical excellence that must be promoted in the ideal city.³

In Book 4, these questions are approached from a completely different perspective. Having completed the foundation of the political and cultural institutions of the new state, Socrates and his interlocutors are now in a position to observe the model they created in its entirety and clarify the functions and features proper to individual ethical skills by observing the dynamics of the social interactions that take place between the ideal citizens. Since the

2 ἐπιτετινομένῳ καὶ ἀνιμένῳ, *R.* 3.412a1; cf. 4.441e8-442a2. For a similar connection between lyre *harmoníai* and ethical composure, see *Pl. Prt.* 326a-b, where lyre-masters are said to ‘take care of the children’s temperance’ (οἳ τ’ αὖ κιθαρισταί [...] σωφροσύνης τε ἐπιμελοῦνται) by teaching them to perform ‘compositions of other good poets, the song-makers, intoning them to the accompaniment of the lyre’ (εἰς τὰ κιθαρίσματα ἐντέλινοντες). By means of these practical performances, the teachers will force ‘rhythms and *harmoníai* to settle in the souls of the children’ (καὶ τοὺς ῥυθμούς τε καὶ τὰς ἁρμονίας ἀναγκάζουσιν οἰκιοῦσθαι ταῖς ψυχαῖς τῶν παίδων). For pre-Platonic examples of this commonplace, see e.g. *Ar. Nu.* 960-968, *Eq.* 984-996, *V.* 959 and 989. On the origin and technical meaning of the verbs ἐπιτείνω/ἐντείνω and ἀνίημι in musical contexts see Rocconi 2003, 13-21.

3 Cf. *R.* 3.398c-400c, with Lynch 2016 on the relationship between the two *harmoníai* selected for the education of the future Guardians and the technical features of lyre tunings.

beginning of this discussion, great emphasis is put on the importance of preserving and reinforcing the unitary nature of the new constitution, but the kind of whole represented by the ideal city and its inhabitants is very peculiar and complex to define.⁴ Far from being a homogeneous and undifferentiated entity, Plato's ideal of a truly unified city (μία πόλις, *R.* 4.423a-d) rather resembles the perfect combination of the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle: this model represents a unitary, stable and 'harmonic' organisation of multiple elements but, at the same time, does not at all entail that all the pieces must be exactly identical to each other—quite the opposite, in fact.⁵ In keeping with this approach, the overall excellence of the ideal constitution is said to arise from the presence of different traits in different people, provided that these individual talents are incorporated into a sharing system which allows them to flourish and become the best in *their own* area and, at the same time, allows the citizens to collaborate harmoniously by exchanging their services.⁶ So, for instance, wisdom (σοφία) will not be present in each and every citizen but only in very few individuals; nonetheless, the city as a whole will be wise thanks to the contribution provided by these exceptionally gifted souls. Similarly, courage (ἀνδρεία) is described as a kind of ethical excellence which belongs to a particular group of citizens, including soldiers and other members of the military forces; still, the brave actions undertaken by these select individuals will make the whole city courageous.⁷

The approach changes drastically as soon as Socrates turns to temperance, which significantly is also the first virtue to be described in musical terms. Differently from wisdom and courage, the notion of temperance is introduced in a slightly oblique fashion by means of a musical image, which does not

4 On these thorny issues and their implications for the relationship between happiness and virtue, see e.g. Vlastos 1977, Kamtekar 2001, Schofield 2006, 30-5 and 212-27, and Prauscello 2014, esp. 8-9 and 21-34.

5 This model of unity that arises from the combination of markedly different elements is discussed also in many other dialogues and applies both to ethical and political matters: see e.g. *Pl. Prt.* 329d-330c, 349b-d and 359a-b, where the 'parts' of ethical excellence are likened to different parts of a face that play different functions and not identical parts of gold; and *Plt.* 311a-c, where the ideal constitution is likened to a well-spun fabric that weaves together people with different ethical and intellectual qualities, who are bound to each other by like-mindedness (*homónoia*) and friendship (*philia*). Both of these notions play a central role also in the musical definition of temperance offered in the *Republic*: cf. *R.* 4.432a7 (quoted below) and 4.442c10-d2, with notes 8, 9 and 33.

6 *R.* 4.423a-424a. For the identification of justice with the principle of specialization, cf. 4.433a-434d.

7 *R.* 4.428e7-429c3.

provide a precise definition of *sōphrosýnē* but vaguely likens it to ‘some sort of *symphōnía* and *harmonía*’ (4.430e3-4). Prompted by his interlocutor, Socrates explains that temperance may be correctly regarded as a type of harmony because it is capable of producing an orderly structure (κόσμος) in the soul by harmonising the different, and potentially conflicting, pleasures and desires that stem from its individual faculties. And it is exactly the presence of this tension between multiple needs and identities that makes *sōphrosýnē* so crucial and philosophically interesting: differently from the self-contained and individual nature of wisdom and courage, temperance is fundamentally relational because its very essence consists in creating a harmonious system out of naturally contrasting elements. In other words, temperance does not attempt to dissolve or neutralise the tensions that arise from the presence of different individual qualities but works with them, organising them into a new system in which each element performs its own specific function, just like different notes in a scale.⁸ Socrates’ second and more elaborate definition of *sōphrosýnē* clarifies even better how temperance can be properly conceived as a form of musical harmony, moving from the inner dimension of the soul to society as a whole:

‘Ορᾶς οὖν, ἦν δ’ ἐγώ, ὅτι ἐπεικῶς ἐμαντευόμεθα ἄρτι ὡς ἁρμονίᾳ τινὶ ἢ σωφροσύνῃ ὁμοίωται;

Τί δή;

“Οτι οὐχ, ὥσπερ ἡ ἀνδρεία καὶ ἡ σοφία ἐν μέρει τινὶ ἐκατέρα ἐνοῦσα ἡ μὲν σοφὴν, ἡ δὲ ἀνδρείαν τὴν πόλιν παρείχετο, οὐχ οὕτως ποιεῖ αὕτη, ἀλλὰ δι’ ὅλης ἀτεχνῶς τέταται διὰ πασῶν παρεχομένη συνάδοντας τοὺς τε ἀσθενεστάτους ταῦτόν καὶ τοὺς ἰσχυροτάτους καὶ τοὺς μέσους, εἰ μὲν βούλει, φρονήσει, εἰ δὲ βούλει, ἰσχύϊ, εἰ δέ, καὶ πλήθει ἢ χρήμασιν ἢ ἄλλῳ ὁτῶουν τῶν τοιούτων. ὥστε ὁρθότατ’ ἂν φαίμεν ταύτην τὴν ὁμόνοιαν σωφροσύνην εἶναι, χείρονός τε καὶ

8 The specific kind of concordance which characterises temperance corresponds to the symphonic relationship of similarity, but not identity, established between the higher and the lower notes of an octave: cf. section 2 below. As I will show in detail elsewhere, it is not a coincidence that temperance and justice are the only two virtues to be characterised in musical terms in the *Republic*. Justice is associated with a more complex kind of *harmonía*, which builds upon the symphonic agreement produced by temperance and is said to resemble the harmony of the three boundaries of a lyre tuning: cf. *R.* 4.443c9-444a2, with Lynch 2013, 97-103. On the similarity between justice and temperance, see also *R.* 1.351d, where *dikaíosýnē* is said to produce ‘like-mindedness and friendship’ (ὁμόνοιαν καὶ φιλίαν), two crucial elements that in Book 4 are associated with temperance (*R.* 4.432a7 and 4.442c10-d2; cf. notes 5, 8 and 33).

ἀμείνωνος κατὰ φύσιν συμφωνίαν ὁπότερον δεῖ ἄρχειν καὶ ἐν πόλει καὶ ἐν ἐνὶ ἐκάστῳ.

PL. R. 4.431e7-432b1

Do you see, then—I said—that we prophesied aptly before, saying that temperance resembles some kind of *harmonía*?

And why?

Because unlike courage and wisdom which, each being present in a specific part, respectively make the whole city wise and courageous, temperance does not make the city temperate in the same way. Rather, it is stretched right through the whole city and makes the weakest, the strongest and those in the middle—with regard to intelligence, if you wish, or physical strength, number, money or any such thing—sing the same song together in octaves. Therefore, we would be absolutely right in saying that temperance is this kind of like-mindedness, a natural symphony of the better and the worse about which part should rule, both in the city and in each individual.

Here the essential trait of temperance is identified in its inclusiveness: differently from wisdom and courage, temperance will be present in some degree in all the citizens of the ideal city and does not belong exclusively to a single social group. On the contrary, this diffused virtue is spread throughout the city and acts as a unifying bond between the citizens, weaving so to speak the political fabric of a truly unified community on the basis of a shared agreement on who should exercise political power.⁹ Explicitly building upon his earlier portrayal of temperance as a kind of symphony and harmony,¹⁰ Socrates now depicts this inclusive notion in greater detail by means of a famous musical image:

9 The central role played by this kind of *homónoia* in Plato's definition of temperance further illuminates his choice to depict it as a harmonious choir: in fact, the very practice of choral singing was a living and familiar example of the importance to accept and follow the lead of the chorus-leader (χορηγός). Ignoring this principle brought about disastrous consequences that Plato and his readers must have witnessed or even experienced in person while performing in a chorus. For this reason, the chorus and its strictly musical implications represented a shared point of reference that Plato could employ to give shape to his innovative philosophical theories, making them more immediately understandable to his audience. For the image of a political fabric comprising individuals with different talents and inclinations, cf. Pl. *Plt.* 311a-c and note 5 above.

10 Cf. 4.430e3-4: ὥς γε ἐντεῦθεν ἰδεῖν, συμφωνίᾳ τινὶ καὶ ἀρμονίᾳ προσέοικεν [sc. ἡ σωφροσύνη] μᾶλλον ἢ τὰ πρότερον. This musical characterisation of temperance appears again at 4.442c9-d2: σῶφρονα οὐ τῇ φιλίᾳ καὶ συμφωνίᾳ τῇ αὐτῶν τούτων, ὅταν τό τε ἄρχον καὶ τῷ

the well-ordered and temperate city is presented as a harmonious choir in which all the citizens sing the same melody together, regardless of their natural or social differences.

Even on a superficial reading, this image represents very effectively the workings of a shared network of relationships that enables the citizens to coexist peacefully and collaborate with each other. But many other metaphors, such as that of a beehive for example,¹¹ could have illustrated this concept just as well, so why did Plato choose this specific musical image instead?

We can answer this question by taking a close look at the musical expressions featured in this passage and their wider implications. To begin with, we should note that Socrates' musical depictions of temperance are based on the concept of *symphōnía*, which by definition admits the presence of melodic lines on different pitches, and not on the notion of *homophōnía*, which by contrast would have entailed that each and every member of the choir sung exactly the same notes in unison. At first sight this distinction may seem inconsequential, but in my view it undermines significantly one of the most terrifying claims made about Plato's ethical theories, namely that his ideal citizens should relinquish their individual traits and motivations in order to embrace an impersonal ideal of virtue that eradicates all personal features.¹²

ἀρχομένω τὸ λογιστικὸν ὁμοδοξῶσι δεῖν ἄρχειν καὶ μὴ στασιάζωσιν αὐτῷ; cf. also *R.* 4.443d-e, *Lg.* 2.653a5-c3, 2.659c10-660a8 and 3.689a5-b2.

- 11 See e.g. Hes. *Op.* 305, *Th.* 593-5, Semon. fr. 7.90-2 West, E. *Hipp.* 77-80. As far as Plato is concerned, see e.g. *R.* 7.520c, *Plt.* 301d-e and *Phd.* 82b, where bees are mentioned together with wasps and ants as reincarnations of 'temperate' individuals. Differently from the *Republic*, however, the concept of temperance outlined in the *Phaedo* is much simpler and more ascetic, in keeping with the stark dualism that opposes body and soul in this dialogue. This monolithic conception of the soul, which does not admit degrees or complex relationships, and its complete identification with reason undermines the possibility of defining it as a kind of harmony, which is by nature a *syntheton pragma* (*Phd.* 92a-95a; for a detailed examination of the arguments deployed in this passage, see Pelosi 2010, 181-3). Furthermore, as Socrates points out at *Phd.* 93b-94b, if the soul is essentially identified with harmony in itself (as opposed to something that can be harmonised), then different virtues and vices cannot be regarded as types of harmony or disharmony, a vital aspect of Plato's conception of these notions. The tripartite psychological model discussed in the *Republic* overcomes both this simplistic view of the soul and its unqualified opposition to the body, thereby opening the way for a truly harmonic conceptualisation of the *psyché* and its activities. See also the discussion offered in the *Timaeus*, where the World Soul is not identified with harmony per se but is presented as a separate entity that 'partakes in reason and harmony' (λογισμοῦ δὲ μετέχουσα καὶ ἀρμονίας ψυχῇ, *Tim.* 36e6-37a1).
- 12 See e.g. Annas 1981, esp. 267-70 ('Their motivation is thus very abstract... they make an impersonal response to an impersonal demand') and especially 333-4 ('No value is

But if this were indeed the case the concept of *homophōnía*, which was well attested in Plato's time,¹³ would have served his purpose much better than the flexible and inclusive notion of *symphōnía*. Secondly, Plato specifies that the kind of symphony he has in mind is a *harmonía dià pasôn*, an expression that is particularly effective because it conveys two crucial points at once: on an ethical level, the expression διὰ πασῶν (literally 'through all [the strings]') conveys the idea that this perfect harmony will include all the members of the city; on a musical level, it gives some precise indications about the nature of the choral

attached to *any* individual life apart from the fulfilment of a social role for the common good. Stress on the wholly impersonal viewpoint is responsible for much of what is inhuman about Plato's political proposals. People are seen from a perspective which avowedly ignores everything which makes for individual and personal commitment . . . Plato goes on to put forward the impersonal viewpoint. His doing so is unfortunate'). Annas contrasts this impersonal ethical ideal with a political complementarity between different social roles but claims, erroneously in my view, that this complementarity takes no account of individual preferences or inclinations: 'One thing Plato does not mean is that individual differences between people are important and that society benefits when these are developed and encouraged . . . differences of talent are seen solely as means towards the greater good of the whole . . . Plato never argues for his assumption that even when need is not in question people may still reasonably be expected to live lives that are determined by their ability to contribute to the common good', 74-6. Later on, Annas recognises that the souls described in the Myth of Er are 'characterized by more than impersonal love of wisdom' (347) but frames this as a flaw in Plato's argument rather than an element that casts some doubts on her earlier claims. Of course, this is not to say that abstract ethical ideals do not play any role in the psychological and ethical development of Plato's ideal citizens, but I believe it is crucial to remember that they represent normative ideals and not practical models to be embodied by actual individuals: in other words, these abstract ideals should be regarded as a 'model in the sky' (ἐν οὐρανῷ παράδειγμα, 9.592b2), which is meant to guide individuals in their own personal growth and not supplant it entirely.

- 13 See e.g. A. *Ag.* 158 (τοῖς δ' ὁμόφωνον αἴλινον αἴλινον εἰπέ) and Ps-Arist. *Pr.* 19.13, 19.16 and 19.39, which highlight precisely the similarity but not identity between *homophōnía* and the special kind of *symphōnía* represented by the octave. Cf. also Arist. *Pol.* 2.1263b34-5, where Socrates is unfairly accused to advocate in favour of a state that represents a complete and undifferentiated unit, 'just as if one turned a *symphōnía* into a *homophōnía*' (ὥσπερ καὶ εἴ τις τὴν συμφωνίαν ποιήσειεν ὁμοφωνίαν, *Pol.* 2.1263b34-5); however, as we have seen above, this is precisely what Socrates *avoids* doing both from a philosophical and strictly musical point of view. This shows clearly how Aristotle's rhetorical and, at times, tendentious readings of Plato's texts should not be taken at face value as reliable and 'objective' accounts. Cf. Annas 1981, 188 ('*Politics* II, 1-6 . . . often [is] surprisingly crass and literal-minded, much below Aristotle's best'), Vegetti 2000 and 2002; on Aristotle's biased account of Socrates' selection of different musical modes in the *Republic*, see Lynch 2016.

performance Plato was thinking of, since the expression διὰ πασών, in a musical context, means ‘in octaves’.¹⁴

2 A Symphony of Opposites: Choral Singing, the Octave and the ‘sound of correspondence’ (ὁ τῆς ἀντιφώνου φθόγγος)

Plato’s musical image, however, entails much more than the two points I have just mentioned. As is revealed by the collection of texts known as Pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems*, a technical source on music that is both chronologically and culturally close to Plato, the notion of singing in octaves entails some crucial aesthetic and performative implications, which shed some light on the theoretical overtones that this musical image would have evoked in the minds of well-educated Athenians, such as Plato’s original readers. For example, one of the *Problems* asks:

Διὰ τί ἡ διὰ πασών συμφωνία ἄδεται μόνῃ; μαγαδίζουσι γὰρ ταύτην, ἄλλην δὲ οὐδεμίαν. ἢ ὅτι μόνῃ ἐξ ἀντιφώνων ἐστὶ χορδῶν, ἐν δὲ ταῖς¹⁵ ἀντιφώνοις καὶ τὴν ἐτέραν ἐὰν ἄδῃ, τὸ αὐτὸ ποιεῖ; ἢ γὰρ μία τρόπον τινὰ τὰς ἀμφοτέρων ἔχει φωνάς, ὥστε καὶ μιᾶς ἁδομένης ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ συμφωνίᾳ ἄδεται ἡ συμφωνία· καὶ ἄμφω ἄδοντες, ἢ τῆς μὲν ἁδομένης τῆς δὲ ἀλυσουμένης, ὥσπερ μίαν ἄμφω ἄδουσιν. διὸ μόνῃ μελωδεῖται, ὅτι μιᾶς ἔχει χορδῆς φωνὴν τὰ ἀντίφωνα.

PS.-ARIST. *Pr.* 19.18

Why is the octave the only concord that is used in singing? For people magadise¹⁶ in this concord, but in no other. Is it because this is the only concord that arises from opposite but corresponding notes (*antiphōnōn*)

14 E.g. Ps.-Arist. *Pr.* 19.32, 19.35; Ps.-Plut. *Mus.* 1138e-1139c; Procl. *In R.* 1.212.24-213.1; Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 657b, *Plat. Quaest.* 1008d, *De An. Proc.* 1018e-1021c, 1028e-1029b.

15 ταῖς P, τοῖς C, X, Y. Perhaps the feminine is preferable in this context: cf. *Pr.* 19.19, 919a9-10. However, it is worth noting that the expression ἐν τῇ/ταῖς is never employed in the *Problems* to refer to strings or notes: the feminine always refers to consonant intervals (συμφωνία or ἀρμονία: cf. 19.13, ἐν τῇ διὰ πασών, 19.17, ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ συμφωνίᾳ, 19.25, ἐν ταῖς ἀρμονίαις, 19.38, ἐν τῇ συμφωνίᾳ ὁ λόγος, 19.39, ἐν τῇ διὰ πασών συμφωνίᾳ . . . οἱ ἐν τῇ συμφωνίᾳ φθόγγοι . . . ἐν τῇ διὰ πασών μαγαδίζουσιν). By contrast, individual notes or sounds are referred to in the masculine or neuter (e.g. 19.13, ἐν ἀμφοῖν, 19.14, τὰ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ὀξέσιν, 19.34, ἐν ὅλοις ὅροις, 19.39, ἐν τοῖς φθόγγοις περιόδων, 19.49, Διὰ τί τῶν τὴν συμφωνίαν ποιοῦντων φθόγγων ἐν τῷ βαρυτέρῳ τὸ μαλακώτερον;).

16 In this passage, the verb *magadizein* can be roughly translated as ‘singing in parallel octaves’; more generally, it indicates a musical practice which consisted in doubling,

and if one sings just one of two corresponding notes, one produces the same result? For the one note contains in some way the voices (*phonás*) of both, so that when even one note is sung in this concord, the [whole] concord is produced; and also when they sing both, or when one note is sung while the other is played on the *aulós*, they both sing as one. This is why only this concord is used in melody, because corresponding melodies at the octave¹⁷ have the voice of one note.

First of all this passage attests that, in Classical times, only the interval of an octave was employed in sustained choral polyphony, to the exclusion of the fifth and the fourth as well as all dissonant intervals¹⁸—a piece of information that shows clearly how Plato's musical image was not a figment of his philosophical imagination but is based upon precise features of contemporary choral practices.¹⁹ Secondly, the distinctive aesthetic characterisation of the nature of this interval, which is expressed by the enigmatic adjective *antíphōnos*,²⁰ parallels exactly the unique relationship of similarity, but not identity, that Plato associates with temperance: in fact when two 'corresponding'

or perhaps also echoing, a given melody at the octave. Cf. Ath. *Deip.* 14.634c-637a (with Barker 1984, 293-8), Ps.-Arist. *Pr.* 19.39 and 19.14 with Barker 1988, West 1997.

- 17 This is one way to translate the neuter plural *tà antíphōna* [sc. *mélē*]. Alternatively, it could be rendered as 'corresponding intervals at the octave' (*tà antíphōna diastémata*).
- 18 In other words, the octave was the only interval at which Greek choruses performed parallel melodic lines. This restriction applies only to choral performances of whole melodies sung at two different pitches simultaneously and does not extend to the relationship between vocal melodies and their instrumental accompaniment, which regularly featured both consonant and dissonant intervals: see e.g. Ps.-Plu. *Mus.* 1137b-c and Barker 1995.
- 19 See *Pr.* 19.39 below, where *tò antíphōnon* is said to arise from the combined voices of young children and men, which correspond to the highest and lowest strings of an octave, and Aristox. fr. 99 Wehrli (τὴν μάγαδιν ὀνομάσαντα ψαλμὸν ἀντίφθογγον, διὰ τὸ διὰ δύο γενῶν ἅμα καὶ διὰ πασῶν ἔχειν τὴν συμφῶν ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ παιδῶν). Cf. also Ph. Jud. *De Agr.* 80, *Vit. Cont.* 88, *Vit. Mos.* 2.256.
- 20 This adjective indicates a distinctive aesthetic quality which combines opposition and correspondence and becomes especially noticeable when listening to melodies performed in parallel octaves: on this complex phenomenon and its treatment in the Aristotelian *Problems*, see Barker 2015a. Cf. also Plato *Leg.* 7.812d-e, with Barker 1984, 194-5: here the word *antíphōnon* seems to have a more general meaning, which may be loosely translated as 'notes in contrast with each other'. The exact musical nature of this contrast is harder to identify: it could refer to some kind of antiphonal style employed in a song's instrumental accompaniment or perhaps to the use of arpeggiated chords produced by striking a row of strings with a plectrum, as opposed to the simultaneous sounds produced by

notes are played at the octave, whether by two voices or by a voice and an instrument, they sound as if they were one and the same but, at the same time, do not lose their individual features entirely.²¹

The author of this *Problem*, however, goes further and argues that the natural correspondence between the two notes of an octave is so strong that they automatically respond to one another even if only one of them is actually performed, since each note ‘somehow (τρόπον τινά) contains the voices of both’. Other passages of the *Problems* help us make sense of this seemingly absurd observation and indicate that it refers to the phenomenon of sympathetic vibration, spelling out exactly how either of the two notes could be said to encompass the sounds of both. On the one hand, the lower note of an octave was said to ‘contain’ the higher,²² a view that most likely took shape in the context of lyre playing: in fact, the harmonic overtone an octave above the basic pitch of a string can be easily produced by touching it lightly at the halfway point while plucking or striking it with the plectrum, a gesture that reveals the high note ‘hidden’ in the lower string. Conversely, the higher note of the octave was regarded as being able to ‘arouse’ the lower,²³ a notion that once again must have originated in lyre practice: as we are told in *Problem* 19.24, for example, if one plucks the highest string of a lyre and then damps it, only the lowest string seems to respond by echoing its sound an octave lower (ἀντηχεῖν), a natural kinship that reflects their being *symphōnos*.²⁴ But this cannot simply mean that the notes produced by these two strings are concordant with each other: otherwise, the same phenomenon should arise also with

plucking them (cf. Pl. *Ly.* 209b, esp. 5-7: οὐ διακωλύουσὶ σε οὐτε [...] ἐπιτεῖναι τε καὶ ἀνεῖναι ἦν ἂν βούληται τῶν χορδῶν, καὶ ψῆλαι καὶ κρούειν τῷ πλήκτρῳ).

21 Cf. Ps.-Arist. *Pr.* 19.38, 921a2-6: συμφωνία δὲ χαίρομεν, ὅτι κράσις ἐστὶ λόγον ἔχόντων ἐναντίων πρὸς ἄλληλα... τὸ δὲ κεκραμένον τοῦ ἀκράτου πᾶν ἥδιον, ἄλλως τε καὶ αἰσθητὸν ὃν ἀμφοῖν τοῖν ἄκροισιν ἐξ ἴσου τὴν δύναμιν ἔχουσιν ἐν τῇ συμφωνίᾳ ὁ λόγος. (‘But we enjoy concord because it is a mixture of opposites standing in proportion to each other... Anything that is mixed is more pleasant than what is unmixed, especially if it can be perceived by the senses and the proportion in the concord has the *dynamis* of both extremes in equal balance’; in other words, the *dynamis* of the two notes of the octave is equal (ἐξ ἴσου), not identical, while the *lógos* in which they stand is double (ἐκ διπλασίου): cf. Arist. ap. Ps. Plut. *De Mus.* 1139c4-6, Iambl. *In Nic.* 121.1-6, Porph. *In Harm.* 103.2-4). Cf. *Pr.* 19.39 below, esp. 921a17-31, 19.13, 19.19 and 19.35, with Pelosi 2009. See also Theophr. ap. Porph. *In Harm.* 63.28-30 Düring (‘Ἄλλ’ ἐπεὶ ἐστὶ τι σύμφωνον ἰσότητα δηλοῦν ἀμφοῖν τοῖν φθόγγουσιν, ἰσότης ἐστὶ τῶν δυνάμεων διαφέρουσα τῇ ιδιότητι ἐκατέρᾳ), with Barker 2015b, 224-5, Raffa 2016, 432-3 and note 30 below.

22 E.g. *Pr.* 19.7, 19.8, 19.12 and 19.23.

23 Cf. *Pr.* 19.13, 19.24 and 19.42.

24 *Pr.* 19.24: ἢ ὅτι συμφυῆς μάλιστα γίνεται τῷ φθόγγῳ ὁ ἀπὸ ταύτης ἡχὸς διὰ τὸ σύμφωνος εἶναι.

strings tuned in fifths and fourths, which of course is not the case. In contrast, in this passage the word *sýmphōnos* seems to identify a special property that belongs to octaves alone,²⁵ an issue that is pursued in greater detail in *Problem 19.17*:

Διὰ τί <διὰ> πέντε οὐκ ᾄδουσιν ἀντίφωνα; ἢ ὅτι οὐχ ἡ αὐτὴ ἡ σύμφωνος <ἐν ταύτῃ> τῇ συμφωνίᾳ,²⁶ ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ διὰ πασῶν; ἐκείνη²⁷ γὰρ <ἡ βαρεῖα>²⁸ ἐν τῷ βαρεῖ ἀνάλογον, ὡς ἡ ὀξεῖα ἐν τῷ ὀξεῖ· ὥσπερ οὖν ἡ αὐτὴ ἐστὶν ἅμα καὶ ἄλλη. αἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ διὰ πέντε καὶ διὰ τεττάρων οὐκ ἔχουσιν οὕτως, ὥστε οὐκ ἐμφαίνεται ὁ τῆς ἀντιφώνου φθόγγος· οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ αὐτός.

PS.-ARIST. *Pr.* 19.17

Why do people not sing corresponding melodies at the fifth? Is it because the *sýmphōnos* is not the same in this concord (*sýmphōnía*) as it is in the interval of an octave? For in that *sýmphōnos* the low note in the low range²⁹ is analogous to the high note in the high: so it [sc. the *sýmphōnos*] is, as it were, simultaneously the same and different. By contrast, the concords in fourths and fifths are not like this and, consequently, the sound of the correspondence does not arise from them: for it is not the same.

Once again, the practice of singing *antíphōna* in octaves is related to a distinctive kind of concordant sound (*sýmphōnos*) which, unlike that produced by other concords, arises from the combination of two notes that are different but somehow ‘analogous’ to each other. Elsewhere we are told that this analogy reflects the equality (*ισότης*), and not the identity, of the melodic functions performed by these two notes³⁰ and it is precisely this equality that gives rise to the distinctive aesthetic effect proper to this interval:

25 This idiosyncratic usage may be echoed in Porph. *In Harm.* 108.19 Düring, where the octave alone is labelled as *sýmphōnon*, as opposed to the lesser *sýmphōnīai* of the fifth and the fourth. Cf. note 30 below.

26 τῇ συμφωνίᾳ MSS, <ἐν ταύτῃ> τῇ συμφωνίᾳ Barker 2015a, 142 n. 42; cf. *Pr.* 19.18: ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ συμφωνίᾳ ᾄδεται. Alternatively, if we retain the MSS text, this sentence could be translated as follows: ‘Is it because the *sýmphōnos* is not the same as the *sýmphōnía*, as in the interval of an octave?’ (cf. note 30 below).

27 ἐκείνη Barker 2015a, ἐκεῖνη MSS. I take the feminine dative to refer to the *sýmphōnos* (sc. τῇ συμφωνίᾳ), since this feminine form does not agree with the previous reference to the interval of an octave (ἐν τῷ διὰ πασῶν).

28 <ἡ βαρεῖα> Gevaert-Vollgraff 1903.

29 Or in the low melody (*mélōs*).

30 *Pr.* 19.14: τὰ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ὀξέσιν ὄντα οὐχ ὁμόφωνα, ἀλλ’ ἀνάλογον ἀλλήλοισι διὰ πασῶν. ἢ ὅτι ὥσπερ ὁ αὐτός εἶναι δοκεῖ φθόγγος, διὰ τὸ ἀνάλογον; <τὸ γὰρ ἀνάλογον> ἰσότης ἐπὶ φθόγγων,

Διὰ τί ἡδιδόν ἐστι τὸ σύμφωνον τοῦ ὁμοφώνου; ἢ <ὅτι>³¹ καὶ τὸ μὲν ἀντίφωνον σύμφωνόν ἐστι διὰ πασῶν; ἐκ παίδων γὰρ νέων καὶ ἀνδρῶν γίνεταί τὸ ἀντίφωνον, οἳ διεστάσι τοῖς τόνοις ὡς νήτῃ πρὸς ὑπάτῃν. συμφωνία δὲ πᾶσα ἡδιδὼν ἀπλοῦ φθόγγου (δι' ἃ δέ, εἴρηται), καὶ τούτων ἢ διὰ πασῶν ἡδίστη· τὸ ὁμόφωνον δὲ ἀπλοῦν ἔχει φθόγγον. μαγαδίζουσι δὲ ἐν τῇ διὰ πασῶν συμφωνίᾳ, ὅτι καθάπερ ἐν τοῖς μέτροις οἱ πόδες ἔχουσι πρὸς αὐτοὺς λόγον ἴσον πρὸς ἴσον ἢ δύο πρὸς ἓν ἢ καὶ τινα ἄλλον, οὕτω καὶ οἱ ἐν τῇ συμφωνίᾳ φθόγγου λόγον ἔχουσι κινήσεως πρὸς αὐτούς. τῶν μὲν οὖν ἄλλων συμφωνιῶν ἀτελεῖς αἱ θατέρου καταστροφαί

τὸ δὲ ἴσον τοῦ ἐνός ('For the notes in the higher pitches are not in unison [with the lower] but are analogous to one another at the octave. Or is it because the sound seems to be the same, due to the analogy? For, in the case of sounds, analogy is equality and the equal is characteristic of the one'). Porphyry's explanation of the origin of the term *antiphōna* confirms that the equality of the two opposite notes of an octave reflects the equality and not the complete identity of their melodic function (δύναμις): 'For this is what it is for two notes not to differ in function from just one: it is what happens when the function arises from two notes *as if* it resulted from one. This is why the notes are also called *antiphōnoi*, just as someone equal to a god is called *antitheos* and the Amazons are called *antiáneirai*, being equal in power to men even though they are women' (τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶ τὸ δύο ἀδιαφορεῖν ἐνός κατὰ δύναμιν, ὅταν ἐκ δυεῖν ἀποδέδωται δύναμις ὥσπερ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐνός. διὸ καὶ ἀντίφωνοι οἱ φθόγγοι λέγονται ὡς ἀντίθεος ὁ ἰσόθεος καὶ ἀντιάνειραι αἱ ἀμάζονες αἱ τῇ δυνάμει ἀνδράσιν ἰσοῦμεναι καὶ τοὶ οὖσαι γυναῖκες, Porph. *In Harm.* 104.8-12 Düring; cf. Barker 2015a, 247, Barker 2015b 316-9 and Raffa 2016, 518-9). Later on in this treatise, Porphyry describes the methodology followed by 'some Pythagoreans' in order to determine which of the *symphōnīai* is most concordant (*symphōnōus mállo*n; for the details of this mathematical procedure, cf. Barker 1989, 34-5) and the octave is singled out as the only interval whose 'remainder' amounts to one, making it the only concord whose 'unequal' remainder is identical to the 'equal' units subtracted from the two numbers that define each interval (Porph. *In Harm.* 108.7-16 Düring). Significantly, in the same passage the octave alone is identified as *symphōnon* precisely on the grounds that its 'unequal difference' amounts to one, while the fifth and the fourth are said to 'follow' it as if they represented 'defective' versions of the perfect concordance of the octave: 'They say that those whose unequals are smaller are more concordant than the others. [The?] *symphōnon* is the concord of an octave, since its unequals are 1; after it comes the fifth, since its unequals are 3; and last is the fourth, since its unequals are 5' (Porph. *In Harm.* 108.18-21 Düring; ἐφ' ᾧν δ' ἂν φασὶ τὰ ἀνόμοια ἐλάσσονα ᾗ, ἐκείνα τῶν ἄλλων εἰσὶ συμφωνότερα. σύμφωνον μὲν ἐστὶν ἢ διὰ πασῶν, ὅτι ταύτης τὰ ἀνόμοια ἔν· μεθ' ἣν ἢ διὰ πέντε, ὅτι ταύτης τὰ ἀνόμοια τρία· τελευταία δ' ἢ διὰ τεσσάρων, ὅτι ταύτης τὰ ἀνόμοια πέντε). Does this reflect some aspects of early Pythagorean terminology, namely a soon-lost distinction between the perfectly equal and concordant *symphōnos* of the octave *harmonía* and the lesser concordance of the other *symphōnīai*? Cf. *Pr.* 19.24 (διὰ τὸ σύμφωνος εἶναι), Porph. *In Harm.* 113.27-114.21 Düring and Thrasyllus *ap.* Theo Sm. *Math. Plat.* 48.16-49.2.

31 <ὅτι> Jan 1895.

εἰσιν, εἰς ἡμισυ τελευτώσαι· διὸ τῇ δυνάμει οὐκ ἴσαι εἰσίν. οὖσαι δὲ ἄνισοι, διαφορὰ τῇ αἰσθήσει, καθάπερ ἐν τοῖς χοροῖς, ἐν τῷ καταλύειν μείζον ἄλλων φθεγγομένοις ἐστίν. ἔτι δὲ ὑπάτη συμβαίνει τὴν αὐτὴν τελευτὴν τῶν ἐν τοῖς φθόγγοις περιόδων ἔχειν. ἡ γὰρ δευτέρα τῆς νεάτης πληγῇ τοῦ ἀέρος ὑπάτη ἐστίν. τελευτώσαις δ' εἰς ταῦτόν, οὐ ταῦτόν ποιούσαις, ἐν καὶ κοινὸν τὸ ἔργον συμβαίνει γίνεσθαι [...]

PS-ARIST. *Pr.* 19:39

Why is it that the *symphōnon* is more pleasant than unison? Is it because the correspondence of opposites (*antíphōnon*) is also the *symphōnon* that goes through all lyre strings (i.e. the octave)? For the *antíphōnon* arises from the voices of young children and men, who are separated in pitch as the highest (*néte*) and the lowest (*hypátē*) string of a lyre. Concordance (*symphōnía*) as a whole is more pleasant than a simple note (we have already explained why), and the octave is the most pleasant of concords, whereas unison has a simple sound. And people magadise in the concord of an octave because, just as in metres the feet exhibit the ratio of equal to equal or two to one or some other, so also the notes in a concord have a ratio of movement to each other. But in the case of the other concords, the endings of one note or the other are incomplete, finishing at the half-way point; for this reason, they are not equal in function (*dýnamis*)³² and, being unequal, there is a difference in how they are perceived by the senses, as there is in choruses when, at the end of a song, some sing longer than others. Conversely, it happens that *hypátē* has the same ending of the periodic movements in its notes: for the second blow on the air made by *néte* is *hypátē*. They end at the same time but do not accomplish the exact same thing, and so partake in an action that is one and common [...].

32 On the theory of sound that informs this passage, see Barker 2015a, 234-8. In brief, the movement made by the two notes of an octave is not exactly the same since the higher note produces more impacts on the air than the lower; however, they partake in one and the same activity (*érgon*) because the second impact of the higher note corresponds to the first of the lower. By contrast, the second impact of the higher note of a fifth or a fourth falls in-between the impacts of the lower note (see Figure 2 in Barker 2015a, 235). Given that their movements do not coincide at this point in time, the two notes 'are not equal in their function'. On the functional equality of the two notes of an octave, see Porphy. *In Harm.* 104.5-12 Düring, with note 30 above and Barker 2015a, 247-8 (at 234-5, Barker argues for a different interpretation of the word *dýnamis* in this Aristotelian passage; I hope to justify my reading elsewhere in due course).

Far from obliterating the intrinsic features of each component, the perfect concordance of opposites embodied by the octave arises from an orderly arrangement of naturally contrasting movements: just like the ideal symphony of Plato's choir, this harmonious correspondence originates in the simultaneous and synchronised performance of distinct notes sung by naturally different individuals. These notes do not accomplish exactly the same physical movement or melodic function but contribute as equals to a joint performance. Like singers of a well-trained chorus, the individual notes of an octave partake 'in an action that is one and common' and bring it to completion by achieving the same end. This unmitigated blend of distinct but, at the same time, equal notes creates a unique type of harmony: the sound of correspondence (ὁ τῆς ἀντιφώνου φθόγγος), which appears to be simultaneously one and many, alike and different, and strikes the senses as the most pleasant kind of concordance.

3 Conclusions

The evidence preserved by the technical sources we have just examined provides us with some crucial tools to appreciate how Plato's musical image reflects the peculiar nature of *sōphrosynē* much more precisely and meaningfully than is generally acknowledged. Plato's choir of temperate citizens is not only a metaphorical depiction of the collaborative and peaceful relationships established among virtuous individuals with different natures. On the contrary, his precise reference to singing in octaves reflects some ordinary features of choral performances and, at the same time, allows him to exploit for his own philosophical purposes the complex interplay of unity, equality, identity and difference that musical theorists associated with the unique aesthetic effect of this interval.

Through his elaborate and moving musical representation of temperance, Plato evoked a network of cultural notions he shared with his readers and played on them to elucidate his innovative construal of the traditional notion of temperance, as well as its social and political implications. While each note of an octave has its own distinctive qualities, just as individual citizens do, they still sound as one or rather 'have the voice of one note', as one of the Aristotelian *Problems* says well (*Pr.* 19.18). In the same way, in Plato's view, a group of individuals can give rise to a truly unitary political system without renouncing their individual differences, skills and talents—indeed emphasising their vital importance for the good of the community as a whole. By 'singing the same song in octaves', Plato's temperate citizens will become 'simultane-

ously the same and different', creating a symphonic agreement of natural differences in the social system of the ideal city.³³

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33 ὁμόνοιαν...κατὰ φύσιν συμφωνίαν, R. 4.432a6-b1, with note 9 above. Cf. Plu. *De Amic. Mult.* 96e-f: probably referring to this Platonic image, Plutarch says that 'in the harmony produced in harps and lyres, the σύμφωνον is produced by means of opposite notes (δι' ἀντιφώνων), a likeness being somehow engendered between the higher and the lower notes'. However, in his subsequent observations Plutarch distances himself from Plato's nuanced and flexible approach and adopts a much simpler model, according to which 'in the symphony and harmony of friendship there must be no element unlike, uneven, or unequal (οὐδὲν ἀνόμοιον οὐδ' ἀνώμαλον οὐδ' ἀνίσον εἶναι δεῖ μέρος), but all must be alike to engender agreement in words, counsels, opinions, and feelings, as if a single soul were divided among many bodies'.

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Aristotle and Musicologists on Three Functions of Music

A Note on Pol. 8, 1341b40–1

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Abstract

In *Pol. 8*, we find two rather different threefold divisions of the aims, or usages, of music. At the very beginning of his analysis, Aristotle first lists (1339a11–26): amusement and relaxation; moral education; leisure. Strikingly enough though, when it comes up again at the end of the treatise on musical education, this threefold division has undergone a few remarkable changes. Now, the division comes up between moral education, emotional purgation/purification, and “thirdly”, Aristotle says, “leisure, rest and relaxation of one’s tensions (τρίτον δὲ πρὸς διαγωγὴν πρὸς ἀνεσίν τε καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῆς συντονίας ἀνάπαυσιν)” (1341b36–41). The main difficulty that this new enumeration creates is notable: how to explain that now the third aim of music seems to consist in the ensemble of leisure, repose and relaxation, while leisure and relaxation were first introduced as two distinct aims? I argue that πρὸς διαγωγὴν should be best considered a gloss.

Keywords

Aristotle – musicologists – music – leisure

In *Pol. 8*, we find two rather different threefold divisions of the aims, or usages, of music. At the very beginning of his analysis, Aristotle first lists (1339a11–26): amusement (παιδιά) and relaxation (ἀνάπαυσις), the former being for the sake of the latter (ἡ δὲ παιδιά χάριν ἀναπαύσεως ἐστίν, 1337b38–9); virtue (ἀρετή), or as he will say, παιδεία, *ie* moral education; leisure (διαγωγή). This is apparently a firm and definitive division which he repeats a little further along: music aims εἰς παιδείαν ἢ παιδιὰν ἢ διαγωγὴν (1339b13–14), each of these aims being a genuine one, depending on the circumstances and persons involved. Strikingly

enough though, when it comes up again at the end of the section on musical education, this threefold division has undergone a few remarkable changes. Now, the division comes up between moral education, emotional purgation/purification (παιδείας ἔνεκεν καὶ καθάρσεως), and “thirdly”, we read, “leisure, rest and relaxation of one’s tensions (τρίτον δὲ πρὸς διαγωγὴν πρὸς ἀνεσίν τε καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῆς συντονίας ἀνάπαυσιν)” (1341b36–41). The main difficulty that this new enumeration creates is quite notable: how to explain that now the third aim of music seems to consist in the ensemble of leisure, repose and relaxation, while leisure and relaxation were first introduced as two distinct aims?

Curiously enough, most recent English translations do not seem to have noticed the problem, and translate the transmitted text literally and without further ado (which is also the text that the three last editors, Ross, Dreizehnter and Aubonnet, have printed)—the most recent one, by Reeve, reads “and third, for leisured pursuit, for rest, and for the relaxation of one’s tensions”.¹ But as R. Kraut acknowledges in his important Clarendon commentary, “It is likely that the manuscripts do not here convey what Aristotle originally wrote” (Kraut 1997: 209).² For, not only does that second division not match the first one, but also, and more alarmingly, it flatly contradicts it. In his first division of the aims of music, relaxation and amusement are like sleep and wine: they are supposed to give us some rest after hard work or heavy stress, or, as Aristotle says citing Euripides, “put an end to our worries”; consequently, they have nothing to do with “serious matters (οὐδὲ τῶν σπουδαίων)” (1339a16–19). Quite to the contrary, music for leisure is closely associated with intelligence (πρὸς φρόνησιν, 1339a25–26), being an “intellectual pastime” as some have translated it, which (whatever that may exactly amount to) makes it a rather “serious” and highly valuable usage of music (taking σπουδαῖος to mean both “serious” in opposition to amusing, and valuable in opposition to worthless, or at least less worthy). That distinction was already announced in the strongest manner at the very beginning of Aristotle’s defense of his plan for a perfect city. There

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- 1 Reeve 1998: 240. Other translations have a similar rendering (*eg.* Lord 1984, Simpson 1997). Many previous English translations proposed the same sort of non-committal reading (*eg.* Barker 1946: “a third is benefit of cultivation, with which may be linked that of recreation and relaxation from strain”). This is also the case in other languages—again, I guess, because of the authority of the three main editions in use. See *eg.* Pellegrin 1990: 542: “... et en troisième lieu, elle [la musique] sert à mener une vie de loisir et à se reposer de ses efforts”.
 - 2 While he points to this, Kraut himself proposes no solution and translates the transmitted text. This is also what Sussemlil & Hicks did in their 1894 edition, resolutely writing that it is not “possible to reconcile the three advantages attendant on the use of music here with the three ends of musical education enumerated” earlier (608, n. 40), and yet they print the received text.

(1337b33-38a6), he opposed activities for the sake of the amusement that suit workers who indeed need relaxation after hard work (ὁ γὰρ πονῶν δεῖται τῆς ἀναπαύσεως) to activities for leisure (using synonymously the verb σχολάζειν, the phrase ἐν τῇ σχολῇ διαγωγή, and the word διαγωγή), that suit “free men”, that is, citizens who do not need to work. “Being able to enjoy noble leisure is the core principle of everything (σχολάζειν δύνασθαι καλῶς. αὕτη γὰρ ἀρχὴ πάντων μία)” (1337b31-32), Aristotle says emphatically: music is one of these “things” that constitute the truly happy life of those free citizens of his perfect city. In its most valuable usage, music must not be something “useful” properly speaking (such as a means toward recovery from hard work) but an end in itself, which can only be enjoyed in a leisured life and by “free men” (1338a13-32). Linking music for amusement and relaxation, and music for leisure would amount to downplaying, even denying, everything Aristotle has hitherto said to defend and promote his views on the true, perfect happiness the citizens of his best possible city should be supposed to enjoy. Thus, what may appear to be a small philological or exegetical quibble actually points to a crucial issue, indeed the very core, of Aristotle’s proposal when it comes to describing the perfect happiness that only a well-conceived musical education of young people makes possible.

Editors have proved too cautious in editing the transmitted, yet highly problematic, text and many translators have followed them blindly. However, several emendations have been proposed, especially by late 19th and early 20th century English and German editors and commentators. First of all, and before considering any exegetical issue, the Greek of the transmitted reading sounds philologically odd as we would normally have expected something between πρὸς διαγωγὴν and πρὸς ἀνεσὶν τε καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῆς συντονίας ἀνάπαυσιν. Some scholars have tried to save the transmitted text by taking πρὸς ἀνεσὶν τε καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῆς συντονίας ἀνάπαυσιν to be the explanation of πρὸς διαγωγὴν, as Rackam does in his Loeb translation: “and thirdly it serves for amusement, serving to relax our tension and to give rest from it”.³ But as Newman had already remarked in his 1902 annotated edition, if such a reading follows common Greek where διαγωγή often meant “pastime” or “amusement”,⁴ it would ignore the specifically Aristotelian usage of that term throughout this book of the *Politics*, and would in fact contradict what we have read in Aristotle’s first

3 This was also Bernays’ reading: “drittens zur Ergötzung, um sich zu erholen und abzuspannen” (1880: 7). Alternatively, Saunders (1981: 473) considers relaxation as the means to διαγωγή: “and (iii) to promote civilized pursuits, by way of relaxation and relief after tension”.

4 Aristotle too knows this common usage: see *NE* 1127b33-34: Οὔσης δὲ καὶ ἀναπαύσεως ἐν τῷ βίῳ, καὶ ἐν ταύτῃ διαγωγῇ μετὰ παιδιᾶς.

enumeration, where he firmly distinguished amusement and leisure. In the *app. crit.* of his Teubner edition, Immish contrariwise suggests adding μὲν οὐ after πρὸς διαγωγὴν, amounting to reading: “and thirdly, it is not for leisure, but for repose and relaxation”. But if this suggestion underlines the difference between these two kinds of aims, it would be very strange to have Aristotle here denying what he previously stated, namely that besides amusement and moral education, there is also a third kind of aim, leisure. Newman himself, following a suggestion made by Susemihl, suggested adding an ἢ before πρὸς ἀνεσιν.⁵ This would be a very light emendation that would allow us to maintain the distinction between leisure and relaxation. As Schütrumpf (who also endorses this suggestion) rightly notes, this would mean that these two aims must form a sort of generic unity opposed to the unity formed by moral education and *katharsis* (2005: 651). But that would in turn contradict the way Aristotle has presented this division so far: in fact, if there is a unity between two of these aims, it should rather be between relaxation and purgation, or purification, which are both described as a sort of medicine (compare 1339b15–7 about relaxation: τῆς γὰρ διὰ τῶν πόνων λύπης ἰατρεία τίς ἐστίν; and 1342a8–11 about *katharsis*: ἐκ τῶν δ' ἱερῶν μελῶν ὁρῶμεν τούτους [...] καθισταμένους ὥσπερ ἰατρείας τυχόντας)—one for working people who need to recover from hard work, and the other for emotional people who need to restore their emotional balance. As for relaxation and leisure, it is true that Aristotle at one point recognizes that both share the fact of being very pleasant (1339b15–19). But being pleasant is a general feature of music, and music for moral education must be pleasant too if one wants it have a real effect on the moral dispositions of youth (1340a14–18). Thus pleasure cannot be taken as a criterion that would link amusement and leisure in any particular way. In fact, in his first division, Aristotle does present leisure as yet another, quite distinctive aim to be added to amusement and moral education (καὶ γὰρ τοῦτο [ie leisure] τρίτον θετέον τῶν εἰρημένων, 1339a25–26)—and indeed, it is Aristotle's main argument, which he vigorously states (in fact against Plato), that only leisure provides the framework for our appreciating music for itself, and not as a means toward a further end, such as recovery from hard work in the case of relaxation, and improvement of one's dispositions in the case of moral education (see especially 1338a11–13; and 1339b25–27). Finally, following Zeller (1921: 771), one might be tempted to read a τέταρτον, “fourthly”,

5 Interestingly enough, this is a suggestion Susemihl made in the *app. crit.* of his 1872 Teubner edition, which he then inserted into the Greek text in his 1879 Greek-German edition with Engelmann. (Moerbeke's translation: *tertio autem ad deductionem ad remissionem que et ad distensionis requiem*, might tempt one to infer that he read either ἢ or καὶ before πρὸς ἀνεσιν; in fact though, *que et* is Moerbeke's usual way of translating τε καί).

before πρὸς ἄνεσιν, which would avoid the critiques made against the previous suggestions. But that reading, reasonable as it may at first sight appear, would be very much at odds with both the threefold division of the aims of music made previously, and more immediately with the threefold division between songs (μέλη), or tunes (ἁρμονίαι), which is at stake in this passage, *ie* between τὰ μὲν ἡθικά, τὰ δὲ πρακτικά and τὰ δ' ἐνθουσιαστικά (1341b34).⁶

Before I come back to how I suggest we should read 1341b40-1, let me face a related problem that this last solution brings to the forefront, namely why Aristotle now introduces *katharsis* as a further aim of music, one that was not mentioned, or alluded to, at all in his first division. Actually, here Aristotle does not present this threefold division between tunes or songs as his own: this is a division that has been proposed by “some people who are experts” in music (τινες τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ, 1341b33), that is, we may suppose, people seriously working on music theory, whom we would nowadays call “musicologists” (such as Aristotle’s own disciple Aristoxenus). In other words, Aristotle is not restating his own division of the aims of music, and therefore is not adding a further aim to those he described earlier; he is reporting a division those experts have proposed, and *katharsis* was one of the three aims of music they have enumerated. To be sure, Aristotle does say that he endorses their division. That, we may suppose, is because it at least partly implements the division of the aims of music he has been proposing and defending all along. Indeed, that is the reason why he goes on to review these kinds of songs, or tunes, one by one: “frenetic songs” (ἐνθουσιαστικά) are suited to emotionally unbalanced persons (and perhaps to anyone who may be affected by violent emotions from time to time too); “reinvigorating songs” (πρακτικά) for working people; and finally, “right-minded songs” (ἡθικά), that is Dorian songs (and not Phrygian ones as well, as Socrates wrongly asserted in the *Republic*), are what we need for the moral education of youth. Those songs implement Aristotle’s own division of the aims of music, with reinvigorating songs for relaxation from hard work, and right-minded songs for the moral education of youth. (As for *katharsis*, we

6 For the sake of completeness, I should also mention the proposal Hicks & Susemihl offer in an excursus (1894: 638-39): they suggest reading ταύτης δ' ἢ πρὸς διαγωγὴν ἢ πρὸς ἄνεσιν τε καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῆς συντονίας ἀνάπαυσιν, taking ταύτης to refer to καθάρσεως at b38, which would mean that *katharsis* works as the means to both leisure and relaxation. Besides its requiring a rather heavy change in the text, this is a very implausible solution: how would *katharsis* work as a means to leisure since Aristotle has so strongly insisted that learning to play the aulos (which is of course the instrument for ecstatic music) cannot help us in developing our intelligence (πρὸς τὴν διάνοιαν οὐθέν ἐστιν ἡ παιδεία τῆς ἀλλήσεως, 1341b6-7) while music for leisure is “for the sake of intelligence” (πρὸς φρόνησιν, 1339a25-26)?

may surmise that Aristotle considered that aim to be part of relaxation, both being essentially restorative like medical remedies).

If we take this seriously into account, one firm conclusion should offer itself, from which one philological proposal on the strange formulation of 1341b40-1 must follow. As we can see from the text itself, it is the case that those music experts don't mention anything like a special tune or song that would correspond to music for leisure; as I have just said, the three kinds of songs, τὰ μὲν ἡθικὰ τὰ δὲ πρακτικὰ τὰ δ' ἐνθουσιαστικά, are those best suited to moral education, relaxation and purgation/purification respectively. Thus, the most obvious conclusion that is to be drawn is that those music experts quite simply never thought, let alone explicitly spoke, of leisure as a special, distinct aim of music. Hence, the philological proposal that logically follows (and which as a matter of fact was proposed long ago by James Welldon in his 1883 translation of the *Politics* but, as far as I am aware, was never followed by anyone else): πρὸς διαγωγὴν should be best considered a gloss.⁷ Read without those two words, τρίτον δὲ πρὸς ἀνεσίν τε καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῆς συντονίας ἀνάπαυσιν is philologically flawless and makes perfect sense. Ἀνεσίς and ἀνάπαυσις come as the third aim of music after παιδεία and κάθαρσις, which in the rest of the chapter Aristotle links to the respective tunes musicologists have distinguished. Reversing the order of his announcement, he reviews first the ἐνθουσιαστικά (1342a4-15), then the πρακτικά (1342a15-28),⁸ and finally the ἡθικὰ (1342a28-b17).

Of course, when one proposes deleting a reading, especially when it is the only reading that we find in all our MSS, a plausible explanation must be given as to why someone would have invented it. The reason why some ancient

7 Welldon translates the phrase under discussion: "and thirdly for the relaxation or recreation of the tense condition of the soul", barely indicating in a footnote: "Omitting πρὸς διαγωγὴν" (1883: 245).

8 Reading with Sauppe (followed also by Ross, but not by Dreizehnter and Aubonnet) πρακτικά at 1342a15 instead of MSS καθαρτικά. Following Schütrumpf (see his very helpful note *ad loc*), I take 1342a16-28 to be the explanation of how those "reinvigorating songs" contribute to relaxation for workers. Generally, translators who keep the awkward—and unparalleled in Greek literature—MSS καθαρτικά consider those lines as constituting another paragraph, but they then lose the continuity, and in fact the very meaning, of Aristotle's argumentation in this whole discussion of songs, or tunes. For a detailed defence of the MSS καθαρτικά, see esp. Lord 1982: 132-4, who argues, quite unconvincingly to my mind, that these καθαρτικά are meant to refer to the frenetic songs that normal people do enjoy without harm, and without undergoing the curative *katharsis* mentioned earlier. It is much more natural to refer that "harmless pleasure" (χαρὰν ἀβλαβή, 1342a16) to the reinvigorating songs (see 1339b25-27: "harmless pleasures are suitable not only because they promote the end of life, but because they promote relaxation too"), which Plato would have quite evidently considered harmful.

reader felt himself entitled to add those words may be plausibly reconstructed as follows. Reading the sentence without the words *πρὸς διαγωγὴν* could have easily left one wondering why *διαγωγὴ*, which has so far been so prominently defended, is conspicuously absent in this analysis. Thus, such a reader might have felt the need to write those words down, most probably in the margin of his MS—perhaps with a question mark, indicating his perplexity as to why *διαγωγὴ* was missing. It should then come as no surprise that a later copyist using that MS did not hesitate to insert it into the text: as *διαγωγὴ* commonly meant amusement, or entertainment, and since Aristotle himself presented *διαγωγὴ* as the third section in his first division of the aims of music, adding the words *πρὸς διαγωγὴν* to the text may easily have been seen as a happy solution that would make the two divisions seem congruent with one another. (As we have seen, quite a few respectable modern scholars have tried to justify this reading, too).

The emendation of the text I propose after Welldon is not only required by the context, where Aristotle discusses moral education, *katharsis*, and relaxation, but not at all leisure. It also has an important philosophical dimension. It prevents us readers from confusing *διαγωγὴ* with entertainment or amusement,⁹ and highlights the importance and originality of Aristotle's own understanding of what *διαγωγὴ* amounts to in his grand picture of perfect happiness: when it comes to the value of music and its importance in human life, one should consider music as an end in itself, not simply a means toward something else, and therefore as part and parcel of the end of human life, happiness.¹⁰ No one else among his predecessors, be they philosophers (such as Plato who defended music only for moral improvement) or music experts, ever proposed such a usage for music. Adding the words *πρὸς διαγωγὴν* into that sentence obscures the most original and interesting idea Aristotle defends in his own version of musical education. Admittedly, even emended, our text still leaves us with the pending question of what type of song, or tune, might correspond to that usage of music. This is a question that one may suppose Aristotle must have asked himself. Emending the text in the way I have defended should

9 This is a confusion that even Andrew Barker demonstrates in his otherwise excellent translation of this passage in his *Greek Musical Writings*: he there translates our text, “and thirdly at amusement for the sake of relaxation and relief from tension”, while he had translated *παιδιά* (notably at 1339b15) by the same word, ‘amusement’ (Barker 1984: 180 and 174 respectively).

10 On the originality of Aristotle's approach on music for leisure, see especially Nightingale 2004: 240–252.

force us interpreters to reconstruct what his answer might, or should, have been; but this is not a task I shall attempt to undertake here.¹¹

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11 I have offered such an attempt in Destrée forthcoming. I am very grateful to Armand D'Angour and the GRMS anonymous referee for their remarks and insightful suggestions.



BRILL

Re-Thinking *Lupercalia* *From Corporeality to Corporation*

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Abstract

This paper is an addendum to the article “Choreography of *Lupercalia*: Corporeality in Roman Public Religion”, published in the latest issue of *GRMS*. In my previous essay, I explored the methodological possibilities of the notion ‘choreography’, a concept that has been critically re-elaborated by dance scholars in the past two decades, and applied it to the wandering of the *Luperci* in order to understand the performative role of their mobility and physicality as traits shared with other dances within the realm of Roman public religion. The aim of the current article is to refine the approaches proposed for *Lupercalia* by examining aspects of training, performance, and reception that are intrinsic to this choreographic practice, and to observe these elements in light of the Roman idea of *sodalitas* (‘corporation’). This approach will allow us to determine how dancing—and, more exactly, corporeality—works in the construction of Roman identities.

Keywords

Roman dance – *ludus* – choreography – *Lupercalia* – Roman identity

Foreword

Year after year, around the Ides of February, the area of the ancient *oppidum* at the Palatine was covered by masculine bodies commemorating in their movement the pre-foundational origins of the Roman civilization. The nudity of the runners, the ludic atmosphere of the races, and, of course, the hectic interaction with passers-by reinforced the chaotic ambience of one of the most ‘irreverent’

festivals of the Roman calendar: the *Lupercalia*.¹ The apparent improvisation of the *Luperci*, however, was carefully orchestrated—or, more specifically, choreographed—by the agency of the participants, while the annual repetition of the ceremony counterbalanced any lack of control. This aspect of recurrence—the cyclical rhythmicity of *Lupercalia*—has, in fact, a curious effect that reverberates on the level of the modern scholarship, for most studies of the ritual tend to revisit, one way or another, the manifold singularities of such a peculiar occasion.² A 2008 article by John North and Neil McLynn, “Postscript to the Lupercalia: from Caesar to Andromachus”,³ perhaps best exemplifies this tendency to return, as it specifically implies the authors’ need to keep working on the *Lupercalia* or, at least, the appropriateness of a precise afterthought.

In my previous contribution to this journal, I offered a few preliminary considerations on Roman religious dance—or, at least, as I warned, a branch of Roman religious dance—and relied on the *Lupercalia* as a means to obtain the necessary tools for my task. Pondering the lack of an explicit musicality that usually drives any research on ancient dance, I turned to the wandering of the *Luperci* in search for other qualities that characterize a choreographic practice, such as agency, visuality, spatial motion, and corporeality.⁴ A ritual which is not orchestric by nature and which cannot be considered ‘dance’, the *Lupercalia* nevertheless fits well within the modern definition of ‘choreography’ as it has been re-articulated by dance scholars in recent years, that is to say, “the conscious designing of bodily movement through space and time” (Kwan 2013, 4) or “purposeful stagings of structured, embodied movements that aim to communicate an idea or create meaning for an actual, conceptual, or purposefully absent audience for aesthetic and social reasons” (Morris and Giersdorf 2016, 7).⁵ On the one hand, this new lens allowed me to extrapolate the choreographic elements from the ritual and to analyse their properties in regard to other Roman ceremonies. On the other, I was able to see how this kind of theorising permits us to observe the process of choreography as

1 On *Lupercalia* cf. Var. *L.* 6.34, D.H. 1.32, Ov. *Fast.* 2.267–382, Liv. 1.5.1–4, V. Max. 2.2.9, Plu. *Rom.* 21.4–10, *Caes.* 61.2, *Ant.* 12.1, *Quaes. Rom.* 68, and Tert. *Spect.* 5. See also Michels 1953, Piccaluga 1962 and 1965, Brelich 1976, Bremmer 1987, Wiseman 1995a and 1995b, Scheid and Granino Cecere 1995, Ziolkowski 1998–9, Tortorella 2000, Rüpke 2007 and 2008, Valli 2007, North 2008, McLynn 2008, North and McLynn 2008, and Ferriès 2009.

2 Cf., for instance, the works by Piccaluga, Wiseman and Rüpke quoted in n. 1.

3 North and McLynn 2008, an addendum to North 2008 and McLynn 2008.

4 See Alonso Fernández 2016a, with bibliography.

5 Cf. above all Foster 2009 and 2010, and Lepecki 2007.

intersecting with issues of gender, class, and ethnicity, thus becoming a cultural means for agency in the creation of social identities.

The foundation of these ideas came, in fact, from an analysis of the Latin vocabulary of dance and body movement; in particular, of those expressions which are commonly used in the context of a religious practice and which are able “to describe movements within the realm of the mind, the body, or both at once” (Alonso 2016a, 318), such as the verb *moueo*, but also *tripudio*, *ex(s)ulto*, *ludo*, and their derivatives. Such vocabulary revealed that most of the ritual manifestations that are conceptualized with these terms respond to a series of common parameters in substance and form. It was therefore necessary to find a suitable concept comprising all the particularities implied by a highly heterogeneous lexicon. The conception of these rites as collective choreographies and social mechanisms permitted, then, to re-elaborate the notion of corporeality as a ritual aspect that pertains univocally to all these processes and to detect the common traits that the *Lupercalia* shares with other practices that have been traditionally characterized as dance.

Many questions have arisen from this proposal and the peculiarities of such a complex rite require a more thorough examination. So now I return to the *Lupercalia*. Following the kind suggestion of the editors of this journal,⁶ this second article on the choreographies of the *Luperci* attempts to elucidate the content of my previous ideas and to advocate more fully the value and necessity of a different discourse on Roman religious dance. It is not the purpose of this paper to re-investigate the religious aspects of the rite, but rather to embrace the rhythmic recurrence of the *Lupercalia* and explore the cultural embodiment of such a ludic atmosphere.

1 Roman Choreographies

In the last decades of the twentieth century, researchers in contemporary theory started to incorporate the body as an area of inquiry. Heirs of the developments achieved in multiple disciplines within cultural studies,⁷ dance scholars

6 I thank the generosity of Professors Barker and Moore as well as the comments of the anonymous referees of my previous article, whose recommendations have been crucial for the elaboration of this paper.

7 That is, feminist approaches to the problematisation of gender, the literary focus on non-written texts, theoretical debates about body politics, anthropological studies with an interest in non-documented human behaviours, and other conceptions of race and ethnicity after postcolonialism.

in particular began to approach physicality as a site of meaning-making, thus understanding the reality of embodiment and using the body as a critical term.⁸ Above all, these specialists considered bodily reality “as a tangible and substantial category of cultural experience” (Foster *et al.* 1996, x) and coined the term ‘corporealities’, insisting on the idea that bodies are not merely vehicles for the expression of something else. At the same time, they argued that “bodies develop choreographies of signs through which they discourse” (*ibid.*), and deployed this notion (‘choreography’) as a thinking tool, a metaphorical frame that generated the analysis, not only of dance practices, but of any other action or event imbued in ‘meaning-filled physicality’.⁹

According to these approaches, dancing is “a cultural practice that cultivates disciplined and creative bodies, a representational practice that explores rigorously strategies for developing bodily signification, and an endeavour through which cultural change is both registered and accomplished” (Foster *et al.* 1996, xii). It is therefore an excellent lens through which to study a ritual like the *Lupercalia*. In the case of ancient Rome, there is a significant number of situations that we could examine in light of choreography: choreographies are, for instance, the walks and promenades of the elite through the streets of the city, the schematic patterns of the army, the training exercises at the *Campus Martius*, the funerals, triumphs, and processions of the Roman *ludi*, the gladiatorial performances, the chariot-races, and many other religious festivals that may or may not incorporate the element of dance.¹⁰ In all these occasions there is ‘inscription’ in motion,¹¹ so the ideas of embodiment and physicality allow us to explore, among other things, the bodies’ role in the production of a

8 Especially in North America, after the creation of a PhD program at the University of California, Riverside. For an explanatory genealogy of dance studies and the beginning of this theoretical focus on dance, cf. Giersdorf 2009.

9 For the descriptive and theoretical possibilities of this notion cf., above all, Foster (ed.) 1995, Franko 1995, Foster (ed.) 1996, Martin 1998, and Foster 2009 and 2010.

10 Important works that study these forms of ‘choreography’ from other perspectives are those by Dupont 1993, Flower 1996, Bodel 1999, Sumi 2002, Corbeil 2004, Beard 2007, Fowler 2007, Favro and Johanson 2010, O’Sullivan 2011, and Östenberg, Malmberg and Björnbye (eds.) 2015, among others.

11 According to the terminology of Connerton (1989), dance is one of the ‘incorporating practices’ through which societies transmit their memories, as opposed to the ‘inscribing practices’ of social reproduction. Habinek (2005, 158-60), however, recalls how these two categories relate to one another and observes the phenomenon of Roman song (i.e. song, music, and dance) in regard to both.

narrative of Rome, in the construction of collective identities, or in the articulation of an unconscious memory.

Now, if the focus of this work is to investigate more broadly Roman religious dance, why should we look at the ritual of the *Lupercalia*, which is, at first sight, the least formal and most uncoordinated movement of all the Roman choreographies listed above? How can we explore the aspects that characterize Roman dancing if all we have is the incoherent improvisation of a disjointed corporation that runs a-rhythmically through a non-patterned space? Unsurprisingly, the answer to these questions is linked to the theories exposed along these lines, for the *Lupercalia* becomes an invaluable framework for observing “aspects of training, technique, rehearsal, performance, and reception” that are intrinsic to any choreographic practice (Morris and Giersdorf 2016, 7). As we shall see, the lack of cohesion of the *Lupercalia*, the nudity, the wanderings, and the improvisation are precisely those elements which will elucidate why a ‘non-danced’ practice turns out to be useful for studying dance. It is because of the moving corporeality of this choreography that we will be able to see how the *Luperci* (like other *sodales*, such as the *Salii* or the Arval Brothers) inform political and social relations in the late republican and early imperial Rome.

2 The *ludus* of *Lupercalia*

The remains of a Campana relief from the Augustan period contain what Stefano Tortorella (2000, 251) has described as the only example of an actual representation of the running at the *Lupercalia*. A small fragmentary piece found in the area of the House of Livia, on the Palatine Hill, this terracotta was originally interpreted as a gymnastic scene, for it featured a group of young boys exercising together.¹² Since no other pieces related to the *Lupercalia* festival were found around the object, it was difficult to decide, at first, the nature of the represented scene, but the relative proximity to the Lupercal cave as well as the characteristics of the naked runners implied strong connections with the ritual in question:

12 Von Rohden and Winnefeld 1911, 152. Although, as Tomei (1999, 438) recalls, already Pietro Rosa described it as ‘le corse Lupercalia’ in a letter from 1869. Cf. Veyne 1960, Tortorella 2000, 251 and Romano 2005, 91.



FIGURE 1 *Campana relief. Augustan period. Currently at Museo Nazionale Romano (inv. 4359).*

In this image, the standing naked figure of a man is surrounded by three other masculine bodies that run scattered in various directions while holding stripes of cloths in their hands.¹³ The agility of their wandering helps to create an overall sense of movement that sharply contrasts with the stillness of the character situated in the foreground of the scene. The nudity of this man also allows us to appreciate the differences between his more mature and thick body and the

13 Image retrieved from Rohden and Winnefeld 1911 (tav. XLVIII). Heidelberg University Library. Digital Images (<http://digi.ub.uniheidelberg.de/diglit/stradonitz1911/0093>).

slim and vigorous traits of the others. He might represent a leader or *magister*,¹⁴ in which case his status is further marked by the whip that he holds in his left hand and his peculiar hairstyle, which has been described as a wig or a mask.¹⁵

From this visual information we can discern some of the most distinctive characteristics of the *Lupercalia* that I highlighted in my previous essay.¹⁶ First of all, the image represents the only portrayal of a group of *Luperci* who are utterly naked, a feature that is normally avoided in visual arts¹⁷ but which constitutes a common trait of the literary descriptions of the festival, particularly in republican and early imperial sources.¹⁸ The nudity of the *Luperci* relates originally to the wildness of a primeval state of the ritual, which goes back to the story of Romulus and Remus and the pastoral worship of Faunus, so it has been connected to the *leuitas* of a carnival-rite.¹⁹ Considered as a sort of disguise, nakedness situates the runners in a remote reality, distant from the urban environment and characterised by the attributes of an animal land. In the words of Cicero, the bodies of the *Luperci* conform ‘a quite savage brotherhood, downright rustic and uncouth . . . founded long before civilisation and law’ (*fera quaedam sodalitas et plane pastoricia atque agrestis . . . ante est instituta quam humanitas atque leges*, *Cael.* 26), that is to say, at the dawn of the Roman history.

This natural landscape represents, at the same time, a channel through which the runners embrace an ‘original’ form of manliness or, to follow Ramsay Burt (2007, 19–22), an image of masculinity “conceived of as instinctive and

14 For *magistri Lupercorum*, cf. Rüpke (2008), who mentions three of them: Mark Antony (Dio Cass. 45.30.2, Nic. Dam. *Vit. Aug.* 21), A. Castricius Myriotalenti (*CIL* 14.2105 = *ILS* 2676), and Clesipus Geganius (*ILLRP* 696 = *CIL* 1².1004 = *CIL* 10.6488 = *ILS* 1924, *Plin. Nat.* 34.11).

15 To support the idea of a mask, Tortorella (2000, 251) quotes Tertullian (*Spect.* 5) and Lactantius (*Inst.* 1.21.45): the former compared the *Luperci* to *ludii* and the latter claimed that they used to run *nudi, uncti, coronati, aut personati aut luto obliti*. This interpretation, however, can be problematic because, as we know from McLynn (2008, 170), in Late Antiquity theatrical professionals had replaced the original runners. Since we cannot see the heads of the runners in our image, it is impossible to guess whether they had a similar coiffure. In any case, none of the extant images of *Luperci* represent such an odd feature.

16 Cf. Alonso Fernández 2016a, 319–25.

17 Normally, the *Luperci* are presented as wrapped in a kilt or long cloth that covers their lower body and legs. Cf. Veyne 1960, Tortorella 2000, and Romano 2005, 91.

18 According to Varro (*L.* 6.34), Dionysus of Halicarnassus (1.80), Ovid (*Fast.* 2.284 ff.), Livy (1.5.1–4), Valerius Maximus (2.2.9), and Plutarch (*Rom.* 21), the *Luperci* run naked or wearing small goatish loincloths. Cf. Wiseman 1995b, 11–12 and North and McLynn 2008, 178.

19 Cf. Alonso Fernández 2016a, 322, with bibliography.

innate". Half-animals, the young *Luperci* impose their manly endurance to the viewers, a 'hyper-masculine' display that naturalises fierceness and resolution in order to show that they are neither females nor effeminate men. Moreover, the heterogeneity of their similarly naked bodies creates the sense of a united *sodalitas*, a virile bond which lies at the basis of the Roman notion of manhood and separates them from other groups in the society. These *sodales*, however, are not yet Roman *uir*i, but adolescents aiming at conforming to the body of the elite,²⁰ so their naked wanderings enact the liminal period in which they are still deprived of their *toga uirilis*.²¹ In fact, they commemorate the athletic training of the mythical twin brothers as a form of exercise—what Ovid (*Fast.* 2.365-69) describes as *lusus*—that prepares them for their future lives.²² As Thomas Habinek (2005, 114) recalls, "it is adolescence or young adulthood, the period between physical and social maturity, that the Romans most commonly associate with play". Thus, in the case of *Lupercalia*, the soon-to-be virile bodies incarnate the properties of a 'ludic' atmosphere in the form of a particular training, their play providing a transitional experience that constitutes mockery, transgression, preparation, and rehearsal.

Habinek (2005, 116) argues that "the reality generated by *ludus* is a reality experienced and carried in bodies". In the terracotta relief, the ludic corporeality of the runners is represented by the explicit nudity of their young figures, but it is articulated, above all, through the indistinct trajectory that their motion describes. This irregular pattern defined by the written sources as *discurrere* ('to run to and fro', 'to run about'),²³ is what momentarily breaks the impression of cohesion created by the multiplicity of naked individuals, so the original homogeneity of participants gives way to a more independent performance, which seems to be almost improvised. At first sight, the *Luperci*'s freedom of choice suggests that each of the runners follows his own instinctive direction without considering the course of the others. Gradually, a collision of

20 The *Luperci* are normally described as *iuuentus* (Ov. *Fast.* 2.365, Liv. 1.5.2, V. Max. 2.2.9, Tert. *Spect.* 5). However, as North and McLynn (2008, 177) note, after the legislation imposed by Augustus (Suet. *Aug.* 31.4), the run was not supposed to include *imberbes* ('beardless young men'). It is, therefore, not a coincidence that most the imperial records provide information about *Luperci* who are in their early twenties (Rüpke 2008, 8-9).

21 Although the evidence suggests that many of the runners were a little older, it is interesting to reconsider the idea of Brelich (1976, 121 n. 35), according to which the *Lupercalia* takes place only one month before the *Liberalia* of March 17th.

22 Plutarch (*Caes.* 61.2) claims that the *Luperci* run naked 'for sport and laughter' (ἐπὶ παιδιᾷ καὶ γέλωτι). See also Plu. *Ant.* 12.1.

23 On the unspecific direction of their wandering and the use of this and other verbs, cf. Alonso Fernández 2016a, 323 and, in particular, n. 55.

separate actions creates a wave of expansive movement that distorts the perception of a disoriented audience. In agreement with the literary sources, the image of the relief implies that the wandering of the *Luperci* aims at reaching a vast amount of territory, no matter the specificity of the path, yet always enacting a simultaneous performance that fills up the streets of the *urbs*.²⁴ This way, their running about becomes a hectic choreography that is at once collective and individual, an asymmetrical manoeuvre through which the runners achieve a sense of cohesion as well as their status of privileged actors separate from the crowds.

To a certain extent, we could borrow Barbara Kowalzig's notion of 'arrhythmia' as a necessary constituent of a collective rhythmicity in the construction of what she calls 'the bodily social', this time applied to a specific group within the society, such as the young members of the male elite.²⁵ For Kowalzig (2013, 188), "rhythm is itself a form of variety. It is the succession of the quasi-identical. It is variety within a regularity", so that "in having a necessary element of *arrhythmia*, rhythm is precisely not about sameness but about variety through time" (Kowalzig 2013, 190). In the wandering of the *Lupercalia*, 'arrhythmia' characterizes an extremely uneven performance, particularly as time relates to each of the runners' spatial mobility—that is to say, their *dis-currere*—. Nonetheless, the moving figures of the Campana relief invite us to see a sort of rhythmicity within their irregular running. These dynamics indirectly reverse and complement Kowalzig's ideas, according to which the different bodies end up stepping back into the anonymity of the communal movement and embodying collective time.²⁶ It is precisely this 'rhythmic arrhythmia' that represents the materialization of *Lupercalia*'s ludic occasion while constituting the driving force of the *sodalitas* in the construction of social identities.

But the *discurrere* of the *Luperci* is not exclusively a form of embodied 'arrhythmia'. Turning now to another kind of performance of the *iuventus*, we may see the similarities between the wanderings of *Lupercalia* and the creative process that gave birth to the *ludi scaenici*. According to Livy (7.2.1-7) and

24 On the notion *urbem celebrare* ('to crowd the city') and the bodily evocation of the city's pre-foundational past, cf. Alonso Fernández 2016a, 325.

25 Cf. Kowalzig 2013, 187-190.

26 On group cohesiveness and individual innovation as mechanisms for the *Luperci*'s social relation, cf. Alonso Fernández 2016a, 323-24. Perhaps in these cases, the figure of a *magister* like the one in the Campana relief helps solidify the bonds between the various individuals by re-orchestrating their collective move.

Valerius Maximus (2.4.4),²⁷ an outbreak of pestilence in 364 BCE prompted the Roman authorities to import a group of dancers from Etruria (the so-called *ludiones*) to appease the angry gods, while the young Romans performed their own improvisation of movements. Whereas Livy focuses on the actions of the *iuuentus* as an imitation of the Etruscan performance (*imitari deinde eos iuuentus*, Liv. 7.2.5) or rather, a parody of their dances in gestures and words (... *simul inconditis inter se iocularia fundentes uersibus, coepere; nec absoni a uoce motus errant*, ‘at the same time, they hurled insults at each other with rude verses; and their movements were not incongruous with their voice’, 7.2.5-6), Valerius’ version is the reverse: first the jesting youth (*iuuentus... iocabunda*) added gesticulations to the compositions addressed to the gods—‘with a rude and disarranged movement of the body’ (*rudi atque inconposito motu corporum*, 2.4.4)—, and because of the success of their improvisations, the authorities called real artists from Etruria to perform a more refined form of dance. No matter the succession of events, these stories aid our understanding of the role of the *Luperci*’s ‘ludic corporeality’ as a result of the significative function of the *iuuentus*’s disarticulated mobility, particularly in connection to the aspects of coarseness, mockery, and improvisation that the authors highlight.

Andrew Feldherr (1998, 181) points out that, in Livy’s account of the *ludi scaenici*, “what had been a *ludus*, a word that recalls both the public festivals that provided the occasion for the drama and the jesting of the indigenous Roman youths, became an *ars*, a craft of profession”. Similarly, in the *Lupercalia*, the *ludus* of the celebration, the mockery that commemorates mythical training, becomes rehearsal for real life. In the words of Thomas Habinek, “play does not exist except in dynamic interrelationship with reality” (2005, 111), so the irreverent mobility of these groups of young men turns out to be an essential medium by which they acquire their future status.²⁸ In both these events commemorating Rome’s history and traditions, a leading group of male aristocrats carries out a bodily performance that defies the standards of a normative behaviour. Their physical involvement in the process—and, more than that, the subversive choreographies that their bodies configure—reverse certain forms of communal or religious communication that are regarded as acceptable, to the extent that they—the *iuuenes*—become special agents within

27 Although Varro is thought to be the common source for these two authors, Oakley (1998, 77) proposes that Valerius’ account derives at least in part from a source other than Livy. On these questions, cf. Moore 2012, 2, with bibliography.

28 Following Morel (1969), Habinek (2005, 120-21) interprets the *iuuentus* as an organized company of free adolescent males, a cadre of young men of military age, like the *Luperci*. Cf. above n. 20.

the social body: they are allowed to perform in this way because of who they are, and they are allowed to be who they are because of how they perform. Furthermore, the destabilizing actions of these youths discourage other groups from taking their place in challenging the norms, so with their collective performance they prevent any attempt to social change.

By means of their chaotic corporeality, the *Luperci* participate in a choreographic process that contributes to the structuring of their power and generates specific forms of social knowledge. This kind of knowledge is based, above all, on the kinaesthetic properties of an audience that relies on their own body's ability to feel motion, recognising the meanings and values of the performance through perceptual and cognitive mechanisms.²⁹ Scholars in dance studies and other related fields have recently coined the observers' capacity to perceive the performers' physicality and to identify somatically with that motion as 'kinaesthetic empathy', a form of motor reaction which draws the audience "into a powerful sense of participation and identification" (Olsen 2017).³⁰ A process which is closely related to the phenomenon of 'emotional contagion',³¹ kinaesthetic empathy focuses on the embodied impact of what the observers witness as well as on their channels for interpersonal understanding, but it is essentially conditioned by a set of social and cultural assumptions. Thus, in the case of *Lupercalia*, the choreography of runners is inevitably informing and encouraging the empathetic responses of bystanders, to the extent that they acknowledge their performance as a shared expression of common ideals, even when there is a clear-cut distinction between them and the exclusive group of *Luperci*.

Such a response to the performance is not just a product of the transitory identification of the audience with the ludic motion they perceive in the exact moment of the running. Rather, the observers recognise such orchestration of Roman identities by means of a kinetic familiarity with the recurring performance that takes place year after year, in the month of February.³² Thus, the reiterated *discurrere* of the *Luperci* constitutes one of the activities that

29 As highlighted by Noland (2009, 36), Marcel Mauss (1934) was the first to claim that the motor body makes meaning, thus challenging his contemporaries' emphasis on the culturally constructed body.

30 Cf. Sklar 2008, Noland 2009, Foster 2010, and Reynolds 2013. Advances in neuroscience and cultural anthropology are crucial for their studies.

31 Reynolds (2013, 213-14) claims that the difference between 'empathy' and 'contagion' is one of degree, rather than kind.

32 As Valerius recalls, 'the memory of that cheerfulness is renewed with the annual return of the festival' (*cuius hilaritatis memoria annuo circuitu feriarum repetitur*, 2.2.9).

Paul Connerton (1989) defines as ‘incorporating practices’ in the transmission of the social memory of the citizen body and, in particular, of the memory of the elite. Because of the need to create and maintain their special image, the Roman aristocracy becomes a choreographer of the festival, demonstrating its agency in the annual continuance of the rite.³³ The runners, at the same time, transmit their bodily practice from one generation to the next, embracing and performing traits that will characterize, repeatedly and indirectly, the ideal notion of the Roman *uir*.³⁴

We cannot forget, in any case, that the *Luperci* articulate their agency in their explicit interaction with passers-by. As the ancient sources recall, they strike them with their lashes in order to purify the crowds and to stimulate fertility among young married women.³⁵ Visual representations of the ritual insist on this aspect as one of the most distinctive dynamics of *Lupercalia*. Thus, in the funeral stele of Claudius Liberalis (2nd c. CE),³⁶ the young runner seems almost to be coming out from the gravestone as he faces the front of the scene with the whip in his right hand and his feet ready to run.³⁷ More striking are the mosaic floor from Thysdrus, in Tunisia (ca. 3rd c. CE), and the panel of Aelia Afanacia’s sarcophagus (late 3rd c. CE), both of which show moments of deliberate flagellation of women during the course of the rite.³⁸ Now, whereas the woman in the mosaic “looks back over her left shoulder at where her dress is raised to bare her body for the blow” (Wiseman 1995a, 16), the female of the sarcophagus is exposing herself to the whipping in a conscious and open way: she throws herself into the multitude of *Luperci* and stares directly at the

33 Interestingly, as McLynn (2008, 170) notes, the Roman elite was implicated in the maintenance of the *Lupercalia* even when the runners were not members of the aristocracy, but professional actors hired specifically to perform the rite.

34 On the experiences and impressions that come through such physical practice as a learning process (*ludus*), cf. Collins (2014), who examines, in the case of the Attic chorus, “the ways in which words and movements are apprehended by the senses, minds, and bodies of a chorus-in-training”.

35 V. Max. (2.9.9): *obuios...petiuerunt*; OGR 22.1: *occursantes quosque*; Plu. (*Rom.* 21.5): τὸν ἐμποδῶν. Cf. Wiseman 1995b, 84.

36 On this monument cf. Veigne 1960, 104-105, Tortorella 2000, 249, Wiseman 1995a, 16, and North and McLynn 2008, 178.

37 The agency of *Liberalis* can be inferred as well from the inscription in the base (CIL 6.3512), which reads *sodalis desiderantissimus*, perhaps indicating that he had been nominated as a member of the *Luperci* but had not yet made his first run. Cf. North and McLynn 2008, 178.

38 Cf. Tortorella 2000, 252-53. For a more complex and contextualized interpretation of these scenes and their dramatic qualities, cf. North and McLynn 2008, 179-80.

person who is holding her arms. North and McLynn note the active participation of these two women (2008, 179), suggesting that “the *Lupercus* shares the spotlight with the victim” and stressing the increasing amount of drama in what seems to be already more a form of public spectacle than a religious rite. Despite the transformations of the ritual in the late Roman empire,³⁹ however, I argue that through these third-century representations of the *Lupercalia* it is still possible to perceive a form of kinetic involvement, according to which at least the female members of the audience enact their own bodily responses to the *Luperci*’s performance. In these and other instances that the written sources recollect,⁴⁰ the subtle forms of kinaesthetic identification with the *ludus* have given way to the full involvement of the audience’s bodies in the game.

3 Corporeality and Corporations

The choreographic study proposed along these lines has served to relativize many of the assumptions that we had about the *Lupercalia*. By looking at aspects of training, rehearsal, technique, and reception, we have been able to encapsulate the ambivalent nature of the *Luperci*’s ludic corporeality, the orchestration of an improvised performance, and the impact of a ‘disjointed’ mobility in the dynamics of collective/individual, self/other, participant/observer. In the introductory section of this essay, I stressed the necessity of examining the physicality of a performance in order to understand the role of dance and body movement in ancient Roman religion, proposing the *Lupercalia* as a case study. My argument at that point was that even the least articulated of all the Roman choreographies would allow us to observe how the moving corporeality of the participants informs political and social relations in the late republican and early imperial Rome. But if that is the case, what bridges the anarchic corporeality of the *Luperci* with the notions that characterize the Roman *uir*?

In his study on the iconography of the *Lupercalia*, Stefano Tortorella (2000: 248–50) includes a series of representations that sharply differ from what the written sources recount about the ritual and its participants. Coming from different periods, styles, and media, they include a statue of a *Lupercus* from the first century CE, the monument of Claudius Liberalis, and a funerary relief of

39 Cf. McLynn 2008.

40 Plu. (*Caes.* 61.2), for example, claims that they present (παρέχουσιν) their hands to be struck, like children at school. Juvenal (2.142), for his part, also suggests that they ‘put out’ (*praebere*) their own hands to be struck by the *Lupercus*.

an *equus publicus*, both from the second century CE.⁴¹ The most surprising feature of all these representations is that they do not portray naked *Luperci*, but young boys wearing a long cloth under their waists and holding real whips. In view of this evidence, T.P. Wiseman (1995a, 16) wonders “what has happened to the *hilaritas* and *lasciua* of the republican ritual” and suggests that during the early imperial period the ritual could have been deliberately neutralized, especially after the legislation imposed by Augustus.⁴² To North and McLynn (2008, 178–80), this view contradicts the stories transmitted by the majority of early imperial authors, who insist particularly on the nakedness of the runners. They therefore propose that each of these representations shows a “Lupercus, not poised and ready for the Lupercalia run, but rather wearing a dress uniform, marking his membership with reference to his ‘nakedness’ and to the ritual gear, but not attempting to represent the reality that was, on this view, only to be seen on 15 February itself”.

In addition to the element of clothing, the *Luperci* of these monuments display a quite particular corporeal attitude, with solid and delineated torsos, their sight facing straight at one direction, and a strong air of heaviness which, even in the case of Claudius Liberalis,⁴³ transmit a sense of what Don Fowler (2007, 5) described as ‘immobile *constantia*’. Compared to the dynamic group of naked runners from the Campana relief, the bodies of these single, static *Luperci* radiate ideas of *gravitas*, *auctoritas*, and self-control, all markers of a form of superiority that was central to the Roman conceptions of bodily instance.⁴⁴ Drawing on Bourdieu’s terminology of *habitus* (1977, 72)—or, rather, of *hexis* as its corporeal dimension—, we could say that these young males have embodied a set of practices, linked to a system of social meanings and values, so they show a permanent physical disposition that complies with the normative behaviour of the elite’s representatives, that is to say, the male aristocracy. In this respect, it is necessary to clarify that manliness, in ancient Rome, is not exclusively a category of gender, as Connolly (2007, 92) claims, but a complex notion that encompasses aspects of class, status, and citizenship. Even if the virility of these draped *Luperci* no longer constitutes an obvious display imposed on the viewers (i.e. they are not naked

41 For the statue of *Lupercus* (Fondi, Museo Civico), cf. Faccenna 1954 and Wrede 1983, 189. For the monument of Claudius Liberalis (Tibur, Musei Vaticani. Galleria Lapidaria) and the funerary relief (Benevento, Museo del Sannio), cf. Veyne 1960, 104–105. Cf. also Romano 2005, 91.

42 Cf. above, n. 20.

43 For the active pose of this *Lupercus*, cf. above p. 54.

44 For these bodily characteristics in relation to walking and standing, cf. Corbeil 2004, 118–22, Fowler 2007, 4–7, and O’Sullivan 2011, 17–20.

any more), the qualities that we deduce from their bodies are still those which characterize the Roman *uir*.⁴⁵ Above all, the masculinity of these bodies establishes clear-cut distinctions with regard to other groups in the society, like foreigners, women, and slaves. The Romans' 'performance' of *uirilitas*—to put it in Judith Butler's terms (1993)—serves to accentuate such social distinctions in order to make them appear as 'essential'. Moreover, as Connolly (2007, 95-96) emphasizes, the male aristocracy also retains gender as an important category in critical discourse, particularly because it "helps recast the competitive nature of intra-elite relations as a contest for virtue". And it is here where we get to the idea of 'corporation'.

In my previous essay, I insisted on the similarities between the *Salii* and the *Luperci* and tried to demonstrate how these two religious *sodalitates* functioned together in ritual and cultural spheres.⁴⁶ Examining qualities of spectacle and performance highlighted by other scholars concerning these festivals⁴⁷ and, in particular, the ideological implications of these ceremonies with regard to the language of empowerment of the Roman *uir*, I then relied on the thesis of Thomas Habinek (2005, 36-38), according to which "ideal manliness is located in communal performance". Clearly, the dance of the *Salii*—but also the Arval choreographies or the equestrian parade of the *lusus Troiae*—constitutes a training mechanism (*ludus*) carried out by the Roman aristocracy in order to incorporate, generation after generation, a set of features and values (Bourdieu's *habitus*) that help to construct the identity of the *uir Romanus*.⁴⁸ the ternary rhythm of their characteristic *tripudium*, for instance, the strength of their jumps against the ground, and the methodical alternation of agile movements in call and response are all examples of *mensura*, *constantia*, and *grauitas*, that is, the markers of a 'virile' identity.⁴⁹ Similarly, the kind of movements that they carry out fosters a form of social relation that combines group cohesiveness with individual performance and promotes the aristocratic balance between parity and competition.

45 For the study of masculinity in ancient Rome, cf. also Gunderson 2000.

46 Cf. Alonso Fernández 2016a, 326-27. On the Salian *sodalitas*, cf. Wissowa 1902, Cirilli 1913, Lambrechts 1946, Bloch 1958, Dumézil 1966, Rüpke 1990, Bremmer 1993, Torelli 1990 and 1997, Habinek 2005, 8-33, Glinister 2011, Sarullo 2014, and Granino Cecere 2014.

47 Cf. Piccaluga 1965, 147-57.

48 Cf. the words of Quintilian (*Inst.* 1.11.18-19) about this process of embodied apprenticeship, a thought that somehow anticipates the modern theories of Mauss (1934), Bourdieu (1977), and Connerton (1989). Cf. Corbeil 2004, 2-3.

49 For a more thorough analysis of these elements with regard to the Salian dance, cf. Alonso Fernández 2016b, with bibliography. I leave the question of the Arval Brethren and the *lusus Troiae* for future research on these matters.

From the formal point of view, the figures of the draped *Luperci*, embody notions that coincide with all these markers of the *uirilitas*, thus contrasting with the *leuitas* of the rite. Isolated from the other *sodales*, these static runners are not explicitly involved in a ludic *discurrere*, so their portrayals correspond to a more permanent disposition of a *uir Romanus*, and not to the exact moment of their running about. Yet, in order for them to consolidate this permanent disposition I argue that the irreverent element of *Lupercalia* is equally as necessary as the rest of the above-mentioned practices that help construct the body of the male elite. As Connolly (2007, 90) claims, “authenticity and naturalness are made synonymous with the manly performance”; these go back to the times of Romulus and Remus, and have played a fundamental part since the transition from the Romans’ original agrarian life. In the case of *Lupercalia*, it is therefore essential that the *sodales* cultivate their particular channels for agency, their spontaneity, and their naturalness. This is why to Virgil (*A.* 8.665) the *Luperci* need to appear as ideologically linked to the *Salii* in the shield of Aeneas, for their ‘irreverent’ bodies are nothing but the other side of the coin, articulating an even more accentuated form of *ludus* that fulfils the same ritual and cultural aims.

Moreover, in both these occasions it is perhaps the fact that the participants enact collective exercises that makes the individual performance of manhood merge with the ‘bodily social’ or, in other words, that turns the performance of gender into a performance of the civic ideals of Rome. We shall recall, at this point, that Appius Claudius used to dance *inter collegas* (*Macr. Sat.* 3.14.14), and that Seneca (*dial.* 9.17.5) hailed Scipio Africanus and “the men of old” (*antiqui illi uiri*) because they “used to dance in a manly style” (*uirilem in modum tripudiare*). These references to communal performances remind us of the Greek chorus, as I noticed in my previous essay,⁵⁰ yet in the case of the Roman collective choreographies, they seem to be almost exclusively a practice for men of the elite, where notions of ‘Romanness’ and foundation cross-pollinate with the element of manhood:⁵¹ no matter the characteristic form of the manly

50 Cf. Alonso Fernández 2016a, 313.

51 Apart from the choral performance of children of both sexes celebrated for the *ludi saeculares* in 17 BCE (*CIL* 6.32323 = *ILS* 5050), there is only one historical mention of a female chorus in Rome, which performed in 207 BCE (*Liv.* 27.37.14). As for other references to female choruses in Roman literature, such as those in honour to Diana at Nemi (*Prop.* 2.28.60; *Prop.* 2.32.9-10; *Hor. Carm.* 2.12.18-20), they could be the product of the poets’ imagination. For agrarian choral dances, cf. Verg. *G.* 1.344-350 and, for the choral performance of the Roman *tibicines*, cf. Var. *L.* 6.3. For an overview of these questions, cf. Curtis (forthcoming).

performance, we can trace the creation of communal identities out of a sum of individual bodies and see how these communal identities construct and are construed by ideas of their essential manliness. It is in all these occasions when 'corporealities' become 'corporations' and when the singular bodies of men become the referent for the Roman patriarchal social body.

Acknowledgements

This work has been possible thanks to a research grant from the RCC at Harvard University. I want to express my gratitude to the Department of the Classics at Harvard for their hospitality and, in particular, to Naomi Weiss for her readings. I also thank Professors Barker and Moore, as well as the anonymous referees, for their suggestions and feedback.

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Dionysius of Halicarnassus on Rome's Greek Musical Heritage

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Abstract

Dionysius tells us that his main objective in writing the *Antiquitates Romanae*, his massive history of Rome, was to convince his fellow-Greeks that the Romans were by origin Greeks themselves, that in their customs they preserved central features of the noble Greek culture they had inherited, and that the people under whose regime the Greeks now lived were therefore not to be despised or resented as barbarians. This paper examines some of the allusions to music scattered through the text, considering the extent and nature of the support they give to this thesis, and asking whether there is anything to be learned from them about the characteristics of the culture which Dionysius regards as both admirable and essentially Greek, and which he represents as manifesting itself among the Romans from the earliest times and persisting among them to the present day.

Keywords

Dionysius of Halicarnassus – *Antiquitates Romanae* – Rome's Greek musical heritage

Dionysius of Halicarnassus came from his native Halicarnassus to Rome shortly after the end of the civil wars, that is, in about 30 BC, and spent the rest of his life there; he seems to have earned his living as a teacher of rhetoric.

* An earlier version of this paper was presented at the *Symposium Cumanum* in June 2016. I was unfortunately unable to be present, and I am very grateful to Angelo Meriani for delivering it on my behalf.

He is of course best known for his essays on the literary styles of the ancient Greek orators and historians, and his fascinating study of prose style in the *De compositione verborum*. But for all their admirable qualities, these writings are relatively short, and his great work was something very different, the *Antiquitates Romanae*, a history of Rome from its beginnings—indeed rather before its beginnings—down to the time of the first Punic War. It was in twenty books, of which the first nine survive complete, together with most of Books x and xi and scattered fragments of the rest. The business of researching and composing this massive history occupied him, he tells us, for twenty years.

Dionysius took the view that no adequate history of early Rome had yet been written, and that contemporary ideas about it were often badly mistaken. His account, he tells us, is based on his thorough reading of all existing Greek and Latin writings on the subject, including some which were very old, and he cites by name a large number of earlier historians, most of whose works are now lost. Clemence Schultze has argued¹ that this is not just empty self-advertising and that he made these claims in good faith, and I see no reason to doubt this conclusion; he appears to have been a thorough, conscientious and dedicated researcher. But his main reason for tackling the project is not merely that no existing account was satisfactory. As he explains at some length in his preface, his central purpose was to convince his fellow-Greeks that the people by whom they were now ruled were not a nation of barbarians, but worthy inheritors of the culture which the Greeks had pioneered. In pursuit of this objective he undertakes to show that the founders and early inhabitants of the city were in fact Greeks themselves, and that contemporary Romans still retained many of the best elements of their forefathers' traditions; and it is partly because this conception of the Romans' origins was so crucial to Dionysius' agenda that he took his history back to the very earliest times.² We should notice immediately that the 'Greekness' which he attributes to the Romans has a strong ethical component, carrying with it standards of both private and public behaviour, ancestral patterns of Hellenic virtue, in some cases preserved even more faithfully by contemporary Romans than by the Greeks themselves.³

I have said that Dionysius pursued his researches very thoroughly, but of course it does not follow that his account of Roman history is always factually accurate. Many of its early episodes, after all, belong to what we would regard

1 Schultze 2000.

2 For a close examination of Dionysius' project see Gabba 1991. Wiater 2011, 120-225, presents a sophisticated study of his approach to historical writing; on the *Ant. Rom.* in particular see 165-223.

3 See Peirano 2010, especially 39-48.

as legend rather than history, and he himself comments on various uncertainties and contradictions in the sources on which he drew. But my main concern here is not with the factual status of what he says about music or anything else.⁴ It is to investigate the manner and the extent to which his musical allusions play into the theme of Roman 'Greekness' and the ideological agenda which I have sketched. I shall argue, in addition, that the musical allusions can give us valuable insights into the nature of this ideological agenda itself. I shall begin by drawing attention to certain things which—in the light of my comments so far—we would probably expect Dionysius to do, but which in fact he does not. It may seem a little perverse to set off in this negative way, but as it turns out, I think we can learn quite a lot about his attitude to Greco-Roman musical culture by reflecting on what he doesn't do, as well as by examining what he actually does.

First, music was at the heart of Greek social life from earliest times, and the Greeks themselves reckoned their musical achievements among the great glories of their civilization. We would therefore expect Dionysius to represent it as one of the more important components of the Romans' Greek cultural inheritance; and yet he does nothing of the sort. With very few exceptions, all his allusions to music are brief and undeveloped, apparently just incidental or even trivial details, brought in on the coat-tails of more significant matters. Readers are likely to receive the impression that music, in his eyes, is of no real importance at all.

With this failure to exploit the fact of music's prominence in Greek culture in the service of his themes we may associate another surprising absence. When we think of Greek music and its history, we probably have in mind such things as the songs of the Homeric bards and the singing and dancing choruses depicted in the epics, the lyric tradition in all its forms, both monodic and choral, and the music of elaborate and highly sophisticated genres such as dithyramb, tragedy, comedy, the kitharoidic, auloidic, auletic and kitharistic *nomoi*, professionally composed partheneia and paeans, and so on—in short, the works composed for high-profile public performances, together with the music of the symposium. But Dionysius discusses none of these prominent public genres—he doesn't even mention them—and his one allusion to the symposium and its music occurs in an anecdote which certainly does not represent it in a favourable light. Nor does he mention any of the great composers whose names appear in other accounts of Greek music in its most glorious days, from Olympus and Terpander in the early period through to Timotheus, Philoxenus and others in the late fifth century and the fourth. It seems that his

4 For an interesting discussion of these issues see Schulze 2000.

conception of the music that the Romans inherited from their Greek ancestors has virtually nothing in common with the Greek music we learn about from other Greek sources and our modern textbooks.

Now for an absence of a different sort. We are all familiar with Plato's contention that the kinds of music performed in a city, especially those used in the context of education, have crucial effects on the moral health and well-being both of individuals and of the community as a whole. This doctrine, in its essentials, was shared by Aristotle, and in one form or another it exerted an enormous influence on ethical and political writings in both Greek and Latin throughout the Hellenistic and Imperial periods. As a moralizing political and social historian, Dionysius could be expected to make a good deal of use of it in his Roman history. But in fact any traces of it that we may be able to detect are slight and at best implicit; there is no direct appeal to the theory of musical *ēthos* anywhere in the surviving text. The nearest he comes to evoking it is in an allusion to music as one of the components of traditional Greek *paideia* (in his account of the education of Romulus at 1.84.5); but the passage conveys no hint that it has any ethical significance. This is all the more surprising in view of the obvious and very relevant (though unacknowledged) echoes of Plato's *Republic* in Dionysius' account of the institutions of Romulus at 11.18-19, which we shall glance at later. His failure to exploit the opportunities that Plato's theories could have provided calls for some sort of explanation, perhaps one connected with the explanation—whatever it may be—for the fact that in this work he says nothing about Greek philosophy or philosophers, and nowhere suggests that they exercised any influence on Roman culture. Or, to be meticulously accurate, he mentions just one Greek philosopher, Pythagoras, and this is only to deny, on chronological grounds, that he can have had any influence on King Numa. Numa, he says, lived long before Pythagoras, and hence Pythagoras cannot have been his teacher, as some other historians had asserted (11.59).

The last item in my list of 'missing ingredients' in Dionysius' work is not in fact completely absent, but it certainly figures less prominently than one might have expected. One of his central themes is the importance of cohesion and mutual agreement between the individuals and classes that form the citizen body; and a famous analogy that appears repeatedly in this connection, especially from Plato onwards, is that between the attunement, the *harmonia*, of high and low notes on an instrument's strings and the 'harmonizing' of individuals and classes in the community. It seems to be a piece of imagery that would have served Dionysius' purposes well, as would the related metaphor of musical concord, *symphōnia*, very commonly used in the same contexts in

a similar way. But Dionysius never applies the word *symphōnia* or its cognates to political or social conditions. He often makes comments on such matters into which this word would fit very naturally, but he always selects some other, non-musical expression in its place; *homonoia*, 'agreement', is his usual choice. One might even get the impression that *symphōnia*, for some reason, is a term which in these contexts he deliberately avoids. As for the concept of political or social 'attunement', it appears as an explicitly musical image just once, very briefly, at 11.62.5, where Numa is described as 'having attuned (*harmosamenos*) the whole people like an instrument'. Dionysius makes nothing more of the musical resonances of this simile here, and there is only other place where the notion of *harmonia* figures in such a context. That is at 11.11.3, where Gaius Gracchus is said to have destroyed the *harmonia* of the state; and in this case we cannot even be sure that any musical allusion is intended at all. The idea of an analogy between musical and socio-political *harmonia* seems to play at most a very minor role among Dionysius' themes.

At the end of this paper I shall say a little more about topics and conceptions which are surprisingly absent from Dionysius' work, but we must now move on to consider the text's actual musical content. It may be that—aside from anything else we may learn from them—the relevant passages will shed some light on the question why these other matters are apparently ignored.

Let us begin with the passage in which Dionysius mentions music for the first time.

Right down to my own time, Falerii and Fescennium were inhabited by Romans, and preserved a few small glimmers of the Pelasgian race, though previously they had belonged to the Sikels. In these cities there remained many of the ancient usages which the Greeks once employed—for instance the form of their weapons of war, such as Argolic shields and spears; the fact that whenever they sent an army out beyond their frontier, either to start a war or to resist invaders, certain holy men went ahead of the others, unarmed, carrying proposals for a truce; the arrangement of their temples, the images of their gods, their sanctifications, their sacrifices and many other such things. But the most conspicuous of all the reminders that the people who drove out the Sikels once lived in Argos is the temple of Hera at Falerii, which was constructed just like the one at Argos; here there was the same form of sacrificial ritual, holy women serving in the precinct, the unmarried girl called the 'basket-bearer' who initiated the sacrifices, and choruses of virgins hymning the goddess in their ancestral songs (1.21.1-2).

The only allusion to music in this passage comes right at the end, but we need to take note of the rest, too; the allusion is meaningless without its context. To extend this context a little further, we have been told that these Pelasgians are the second wave of Greeks to have arrived in central Italy at a very early date, long before the Trojan War. There they joined the first group—whom Dionysius calls ‘Aborigines’ and who came, he says, from Arcadia—and together they expelled the barbarous Sikels, who were eventually driven off the Italian mainland altogether. (Dionysius is evidently concerned to make it clear that these genuine *barbaroi* played no part in the developments which led to the foundation of Rome.) The Pelasgians originated in Argos, as we learn from the present passage, but had not migrated to Italy directly from the Peloponnese; their ancestors had moved long ago from Argos to Thessaly, and it was from Thessaly that these Pelasgians travelled to Italy and settled in the regions we know as Latium and Etruria. At this stage, according to Dionysius’ account, Rome did not yet exist, and the towns he mentions here, Falerii and Fescennium, are some 50 kilometres to the north of the site where it later grew up, so there is no sense in which the Pelasgians of this period were Romans. But Dionysius is not trying to pretend that they were; the claim he is making is only that when the actual founders of Rome finally arrived on the scene, the population of the area that received them and joined with them in their enterprise were unambiguously Greek.

To return to our passage itself, Dionysius sets out a string of pieces of evidence that the Pelasgians came originally from Argos. He doesn’t tell us explicitly where he found his information, but the reference in the first sentence to ‘glimmers’ or ‘remnants’ (*zōpyra*) of these people which still existed in his own time suggests that he may have confirmed aspects of the written records or added some of the details on the basis of personal observation, as he occasionally does elsewhere. But it is their existence in the distant past rather than their survival into the present that really concerns him, as is shown by his consistent use of the imperfect rather than the present tense in the remainder of the passage.

We need to notice that everything mentioned in Dionysius’ catalogue of evidence belongs in one or other or both of two categories—military (shields, spears, armies) and religious (holy men, holy women, sacrifices and other rituals, the temple of Hera and so on)—and most of the passages we’ll come to later are similar in that respect. But in fact it’s slightly misleading, at least in the present passage, to pair the military group with the religious group as though they were of equal importance, since the only items on the list which are unconnected with religion are the shields and spears; martial expeditions are indeed mentioned, but only as the setting in which the truce-bearing

'holy men' perform their function, and it is the activities of the holy men, not the operations of the army, which constitute the relevant piece of evidence. The items and practices which reveal the Greekness of the ancient Pelasgians are overwhelmingly of a religious sort, and it is among these that we find our allusion to music: ceremonies connected with the temple of Hera at Falerii included 'choruses of virgins hymning the goddess in their ancestral songs'.

What are we to say about this allusion? It seems very slight, but there are points worth noticing. There is first its religious context, which I have just noted. Then there is the fact that the singers are young and female; they are *parthenoi*, unmarried girls, regularly regarded as symbolizing innocence and purity, and choral songs described as *partheneia* and performed by such groups were widespread in archaic and classical Greece. Singing women are also mentioned by Dionysius in other passages to do with religion in the early period; there are examples, for instance, in I.31, I.55 and II.4. Thirdly, what they sing are *ōidai patrioi*, songs belonging to the ancestral tradition of their homeland, which must in this case be Argos, and references to *ōidai patrioi* or *hymnoi patrioi* appear in several other passages too, notably in II.34, II.70 and III.32. There is no indication that the pieces so described were elaborate compositions by eminent composers, like the *partheneia* of Alcman or Pindar, for instance; on the contrary, the fact that they are unattributed, and described merely as *ōidai patrioi*, strongly suggests that they were simple and traditional, and probably anonymous, as were the songs described in the same terms elsewhere. That would fit well, too, with the profile of other pieces of music which Dionysius mentions, and I'm reasonably sure that it's correct.

But there is a more important point to make about the adjective *patrios*, which is that Dionysius' deployment of it in the *Antiquitates Romanae* is a major element in the repertoire of his ideological rhetoric. It appears over 90 times in the surviving parts of the text, most often attached to nouns such as *thysiai* ('sacrifices'), *nomoi* ('laws'), *ethismoi* ('customs') and above all to nouns designating political constitutions—referred to either by the general term *politeia*, 'constitution', or as a constitution of a specific type, such as *aristokratia*. The phrase *patrios politeia*, 'ancestral constitution', is of course much older than Dionysius; it appears first, as far as I know, in the late fifth century, in passages from the sophist and rhetorician Thrasyllachus and the orator Lysias which are quoted elsewhere by Dionysius himself.⁵ More generally, the adjective *patrios* is common in fifth- and fourth-century prose writings on political themes, where it is attached most often to the noun *nomos*, 'law'. In all these occurrences, both in the earlier texts and in the works of Dionysius, it

5 Thrasyllachus at *Demosth.* 3, Lysias at *Lys.* 32.

is much more than a descriptive expression; it confers weight and authority on the law, custom or constitution that it characterizes, and at the same time implies that the writer himself is someone who values the ancestral tradition, thereby showing himself to be a person of austere moral character and sober judgement. This tells us a good deal, then, about the authorial persona that Dionysius wants to project in his history. To return to our present passage, the overt purpose of designating the songs as *ōidai patrioi* is simply to indicate that they belong to the tradition of ancient Argos; but the atmosphere of authority and approval that suffuses the adjective in all its other contexts spills over onto this occurrence too, and registers the honourable status of these songs within the framework of a solidly respectable social ideology.

We may usefully bear these few points in mind as we move to another passage. It is concerned with the next group of Greek settlers after the Pelasgians to arrive in this part of Italy; according to Dionysius (1.31) it was an influx of Arcadians under the leadership of Evander, sixty years before the Trojan War. In 1.33, after writing at some length about the typically Arcadian forms of sacrifice and other religious ceremonies which these people brought with them, some of which survived, he says, right down to his own time, he continues as follows.

These Arcadians are also said to have been the first to transport into Italy the use of Greek writing (*grammata*), which had recently made its appearance, and music played on instruments, which are called lyres and *trigōna* (harps) and *auloi*, the previous people [*sc.* in Italy] having used no musical devices apart from pastoral Panpipes; and they established laws, and transformed people's way of life from its pervasive bestiality to a civilized condition, and introduced crafts and occupations and many other things that are beneficial to the community; and for these reasons they met with great favour from those who had received them. This was the second Greek race after the Pelasgians who came to Italy and shared a place of residence with the Aborigines, settling in the best part of Rome (1.33.4-5).

Dionysius represents these Arcadians as the bringers of a civilized culture to the area in which Rome was founded, and the list of benefits which they brought is obviously reminiscent of other Greek accounts of the transformation of human life from a primitive to a civilized condition. We might think in particular of the gifts that Prometheus is said to have given to benighted humans in the *Prometheus Vincetus* and in the 'Great Speech' put by Plato into the mouth

of Protagoras,⁶ where they are supplemented by attributes of a moral sort, provided by Zeus, without which cooperative social life is impossible. But there is a difference. In those legends the skills, attributes and other items which are necessary for a civilized human life are provided by a superhuman being, and had previously been unknown to mankind; whereas in our passage these benefits already existed among some human beings, constituting their own pre-existing culture, and the action recorded is their transmission of them to others. In this respect the story is more like accounts given by some of the Alexander historians, and recorded by Diodorus Siculus and Flavius Arrianus (Arrian), of tales told by the Indians about a great conqueror who came with his army from the north, at a time when the Indians had no cities and were living in what we might call a 'state of nature'. The Greeks identified this conqueror with Dionysus, though Diodorus also reports, rather paradoxically, that he reigned over India for 52 years and then died, and was succeeded by his sons (Diod. Sic. 11.38.6). These people, we are told, taught the Indians agricultural skills, and how to preserve fruit and make wine; they founded cities and introduced laws, law-courts and religious observances in honour of the gods; and they established everything else which a civilized life involves. Arrian adds that among the religious rituals that they taught were those in honour of Dionysus himself, in which they played cymbals and drums, and danced the satyr dance known to the Greeks as the *kordax* (Arrian *Hist. Ind.* 7.8).

The passage in our text obviously belongs to the same family as all these others, but from our present perspective its main interest is in the reference to musical instruments. The *syrinx* or Panpipe is regularly treated as an instrument of shepherds and others who live in wild places outside the centres of civilization, typically in the mountains; it has no significant role in the life of the city, and here is emblematic of the primitive social conditions under which these Italians were living. The other instruments named in the passage, the lyres, harps and *auloi* brought with them by the Arcadians, are equally emblematic of a properly established civic community. But Dionysius' allusion to them here raises a significant question. I said earlier that he never mentions music of the sort that was heard in high-profile public performances, in dithyrambs, kitharōidic *nomoi* and so on, but we might wonder whether the fact that he now treats these instruments as essentials of a civilized life is, exceptionally, an implicit recognition that such performances have genuine cultural importance. On the other hand, with one probable but only implicit exception, he says nothing anywhere else in this work to suggest that they have a

6 Plato, *Prt.* 320c8-322d5.

significant part to play in the idealized proto-Roman civilization he is describing. He mentions lyres in only one other passage (VII.72.5), and there the message conveyed is entirely different. *Auloi* appear in that passage too and in a handful of others, but none of them assign cultural significance to public performances of a sophisticated sort.

How, then, are we to interpret the allusion to these instruments in the present passage? Perhaps the mention of a third type of instrument, the *trigōnos*, may give us a clue. Harps of various kinds were known in the Greek world from early times, but in the archaic and classical periods were never performed in public. Their place, as depicted both in literature and in vase-paintings, is always indoors, either in domestic scenes where they are played especially by women, or in the context of the symposium. We hear of a few public performances on harps in Hellenistic times, but even then they are very much the exception. So we might infer from this that the culturally essential music-making that Dionysius has in mind when he mentions the three types of instrument does not consist in elaborate performances presented in public, but takes place in the home or in other relatively private settings. A suggestion of this sort may be encouraged by a parallel with the contents of the Greek-style education given to Romulus and Remus (1.84.5), which I mentioned earlier; writing and music are the first items listed among its elements, just as in our passage they are first among the elements of civilization. The concepts of education and civilization are always very closely intertwined, and it seems at least a reasonable hypothesis that when Dionysius represents these instruments as pieces of equipment necessary for civilized living, their role is in the development of the musical skills learned in the course of a child's education, and in the exercise and appreciation of these skills in a cultivated citizen's private life.

But if what he has in mind is musical education, his views about it may need to be qualified in the light of a story he tells later about Aristodemus of Cumae, who engineered a *coup d'état* against the ruling oligarchs in 504 BC, and made himself tyrant of his city. After killing most of his opponents and banishing their children to the remote countryside, he set about ensuring that the children of the remaining citizens would never be able to mount an effective rebellion against him.

In order that a noble and manly spirit would not spring up in any of the other citizens, he decided to feminize the young men who were being raised in the city through the manner in which they were brought up, putting an end to gymnasia and to training in the use of weapons, and transforming the way of life that the children had previously followed. He commanded the boys to wear long hair like the girls, and to decorate it

with flowers, curl it, and tie it up in hair-nets, to wear embroidered robes hanging down to their feet, with delicate, soft shawls draped over them, and to spend their lives in the shade. When they went to the schools of the dancing-teachers, *aulos*-players and other such lackeys of the Muses, the *paidagōgoi* who accompanied them were women carrying parasols and fans; and these same women bathed them, bringing combs, alabaster pots containing perfumes, and mirrors into the bath-houses. Through this kind of upbringing he went on ruining the young men until they had completed their twentieth year, and from that time onwards he allowed them to be counted as men (VII.9.3-5).

This passage too has an eminent ancestor; it is Herodotus, in his account of the advice that Croesus gave to Cyrus about how he should tame the Lydians he had conquered, so that they would not become a threat to his authority (Hdt. I.155). Weapons are course banned, as in the scheme of Aristodemus. Croesus says nothing about suitable coiffures or bathing arrangements, but he does prescribe changes in the Lydians' clothing, requiring them to wear tunics under their robes, and he says that their sons should be trained to play lyres and harps. If Cyrus lays down these rules, he says, he will soon see that the Lydians have become women instead of men. The parallel between the two passages is not exact, but Dionysius is evidently reactivating a *topos* which Herodotus had established. Perhaps he is drawing on other classical Greek sources too. Herodotus does not mention the parasols which figure in Dionysius' tale, or the injunction that the young men must spend their time in the shade—to prevent them getting the tanned and weather-beaten complexions that are marks of virile men; but parasols were certainly part of the Greeks' image of the soft-living Lydians on which Dionysius seems to be drawing, as we know from vase paintings of effeminate aesthetes who affected Lydian manners around 500 BCE, including Anacreon, the Oscar Wilde of his time.⁷

A musical training, as construed in this passage of Dionysius, is something that contributes to the moral enfeeblement and feminization of young men, and the word he uses to refer to the teachers of *mousikē*—*mousokolakes*, which I have translated as 'lackeys of the Muses'—is plainly contemptuous. Yet elsewhere he recognizes music as an integral part of a Greek educational system of which he approves. But there need be no contradiction here, though I don't think we should try to resolve it by appealing to distinctions, of the type well known from Plato, between ethically beneficial and ethically deleterious kinds of music. Nothing in Dionysius' remarks suggests that the music taught in the

7 See e.g. Beazley 1963, 185 no. 32, and cf. Caskey and Beazley 1954, 57-61.

approved Greek curriculum and the music taught to the Cumaeans are different in kind. What really makes the difference, I suggest, is partly that musical education in the latter case is just one among a good many other things which interact with one another to produce their effect, and partly that the Cumaean youths are subjected to these feminizing influences for such a long time, right up to the time when they complete their twentieth year. By the standards of the major authorities on such matters, Plato and Aristotle, that is far too long, and is likely to have disastrous consequences. According to Plato's Socrates,

Whenever anyone lets music beguile his soul with its piping, and lets it pour into his soul through his ears as though through a funnel the sweet and soft and mournful melodies we have just been discussing, and when he uses up his whole life humming, enraptured by song, then if he has anything of the spirited element in him, to begin with this man will temper it like iron and make useful what was useless and hard. But if he persists in enchanting it without ceasing, he will eventually dissolve his spirit and melt it till he pours it away, and cuts, as it were, the sinews from his soul, and makes of it a 'feeble warrior' (Plato *Rep.* 411a-b).

That, of course, is precisely the result that Aristodemus of Cumae was aiming for. But it would be rash to assume that Dionysius has Plato specifically in mind at this point. As we can see from Herodotus' story about Croesus and Cyrus (along with several other fifth-century texts), the notion that excessive attention to music makes men soft and effeminate was present in Greek culture decades before Plato wrote about it, and independently of any philosophical baggage.

On the other hand, it's clear from his other writings that Dionysius was familiar with Plato's dialogues, and there's a passage in the *Antiquitates Romanae* itself (11.18-19) which leaves little doubt that he had read the *Republic* and absorbed a good many of its ideas. The context is his account of the admirable institutions laid down by Romulus.

He realized that the causes of the good government of cities, which all politicians chatter about but few succeed in establishing, are first, the favour of the gods, whose presence brings all human activities to greater success; next moderation (*sōphrosynē*) and justice (*dikaiosynē*), through whose influence people do less harm to one another and are more in agreement, and measure happiness not by the quantity of the most disgraceful pleasures but by what is noble (*kalon*); and finally courage in war, which also makes the other virtues useful to those that have

them. He understood that none of these good things arise by chance, for he knew that it is good laws and the pursuit of noble enterprises that make a city reverent, moderate, devoted to justice and courageous in war (II.18.1-2).

The thoughts expressed here are very close to those of the *Republic*, despite the fact that *eusebeia*, 'reverence' or 'piety', has supplanted Plato's *sophia*, 'wisdom', in the list of virtues. The substitution is wholly in line with the central importance of religious practices in Dionysius' various portrayals of well constituted communities, and with the complete absence from them of any suggestion that advanced intellectual attainments have a significant part to play. We might reasonably, on the other hand, argue that the contents of the passage are too generalized, and in a sense too commonplace, to allow us to be sure that Dionysius' inclusion of them was prompted by his reading of Plato. In this respect the sequel has more weight. After setting out the arrangements that Romulus put in place for the proper worship of the gods, he continues:

But he threw out all the traditional legends about the gods which contain blasphemies or evil-speaking against them, holding that they are wicked, useless, unseemly and unworthy of good men, let alone of the gods; and he trained the people to say and think the best things about the gods, and to attribute to them no behaviour unworthy of their blessed nature.

[19] For among the Romans there is no story of Ouranos being castrated by his own sons, or of Kronos destroying his own children for fear of their attacks on him, or of Zeus putting an end to the rule of Kronos and shutting his own father up in the dungeon of Tartarus, or indeed of wars or wounds, or of gods being tied up or enslaved by humans (II.19.1).

The Platonic ancestry of these remarks can hardly be doubted. It is self-evidently a rather highly coloured reprise of a well-known passage in *Republic* Book II (377b-378e); and the next sequence of statements in Dionysius' account (II.19.2-5, too long to quote in full), which includes both direct and indirect allusions to music, is equally in tune with views Plato expresses in both the *Republic* and the *Laws*. Essentially, it makes three claims. First, no Roman festival is conducted with women dressed in black, beating their breasts and singing laments for gods who have disappeared, as the Greeks do for Persephone and other divine beings. Secondly, even in these decadent modern times, the Romans do not go in for wild ecstasies or Corybantic raving, or Bacchic rituals and secret mysteries, or all-night activities with men and women consorting together in temples, or any other such excesses; all their ceremonies

are conducted with a dignity unequalled elsewhere, among either Greeks or barbarians. Finally, Rome is flooded with people of innumerable different races, who conduct their sacred rituals in their own peculiar ways. But unlike other cities, Rome does not adopt them all as her own, and even when—in obedience to certain oracles—it does adopt a few of them, it celebrates them in ways consistent with its own customs and rejects all outlandish flummery. Thus in the annual festivals of Cybele, for instance, the praetors perform sacrifices and hold games in the Roman way, but the priest and priestess of the goddess are Phrygians, not Romans, and it is they who process through the city wearing strange symbols on their multi-coloured clothes, beating drums to the accompaniment of *auloi*. Romans are strictly forbidden to do any such things, and they ‘detest all high-flown nonsense that lacks decorum’.

In music as in all else, what Dionysius dismisses as un-Roman are excesses of emotional display, unrestrained ecstasies, elaborate ostentation and anything that is outlandishly exotic; what he applauds is the maintenance of ancient tradition, simplicity and restraint. He represents these characteristics as fundamentally Roman, in some cases more consistently maintained by Romans than by the Greeks themselves.⁸ But at the same time the unmistakably Platonic overtones of everything in these two chapters are enough to convey the impression that like so much else in the Roman repertoire, these noble traditions are by origin Greek, even if contemporary Greeks have partly abandoned them.

The institutions of Romulus, along with those of King Numa, are the ones that Dionysius praises most of all among those of the early Romans. Excerpts from another passage of Book II, again about Romulus, will help to confirm some of the points I have been making. It depicts the celebrations after one of his successful campaigns against the Sabines.

He led his army home, carrying the booty from those who had fallen in the battle and dedicating the finest of the spoils as offerings to the gods; and at the same time he made many sacrifices. He himself came last in the procession, dressed in a purple robe with a laurel wreath on his head, and riding in a four-horse chariot so as to preserve his royal dignity. The rest of the army, both foot-soldiers and horsemen, accompanied him, deployed in their various divisions, hymning the gods in their ancestral songs, and praising their leader in improvised compositions.

8 See Peirano 2010, especially 39–48.

After describing the way in which they were received by their families and other citizens, Dionysius continues:

That, then, was the style of the trophy-carrying procession of victory and the sacrifice, which the Romans call a 'triumph', in the form in which it was originally instituted by Romulus. But in our life-time it has become very expensive, and is now an ostentatious display, whose theatricality is designed to make a display of wealth rather than to register approval of valour; and in all its aspects it has departed from its ancient simplicity (excerpted from II. 34.1-3).

Dionysius is evidently trying to impress on his readers the conviction that the glitzy and ostentatious 'theatricality' of Roman triumphs in his own time is to be deplored, and that it would be much better to return to the simplicity of the ceremonies in the time of Romulus; and the nature of the music included in those early victory parades contributes substantially to their modest profile. There are 'ancestral' songs in honour of the gods, *ōidai patrioi* once again, songs rooted in ancient tradition, which are not sung by professionals or specially trained choruses, but by the soldiers themselves. Similarly, their expressions of praise for their general Romulus are not the elaborate works of sophisticated composers or poets. The soldiers praise him *poiēmasin autoschediois*, that is, in pieces that they extemporize on the spot. We cannot be sure whether or not these *poiēmata* were musical in our sense of the word—that is, whether or not they included tunes, invented *ad hoc* by the soldiers, to go with their extempore verses—since when it is not further qualified, the noun *poiēma* allows for either possibility. But when the same phrase reappears at VII.72.11, again in connection with soldiers in a triumphal parade, it clearly refers to songs: *poiēmata aidousin autoschedia*, 'they sing extempore pieces'. Be that as it may, however, the image is of a simple and informal celebration, far removed from the pomp and swagger of Roman triumphs in later periods.

Dionysius' statements here fit well into the ideological framework of the other passages we've been considering. But his description in Book VII of the large and colourful procession called the *Pompa circensis* which introduced the celebration of the 'Great Games', the *ludi magni*, may seem to undermine my characterisation of this ideology. Here, as quite often elsewhere, Dionysius says that he is relying on the authority of Quintus Fabius Pictor (c. 200 BC); and he claims to be describing the proceedings in the form in which they were instituted, by command of the senate, not long after the expulsion of Tarquinius Superbus, who went to ground in Cumae with the tyrant Aristodemus around the end of the sixth century. The topic is introduced in VII.70-71; details follow

in VII.72. By the standards of this text VII.72 is an enormous chapter, much too long to be quoted or adequately discussed here; I shall merely summarize it as best I can, and try to bring out some of its most significant features.

The procession is led by young men approaching military age, on horseback and on foot, who are followed by a company of horse-drawn chariots. Then come the contestants in the athletic games, naked except for their loin-cloths. (Here Dionysius pauses to demonstrate, with quotations from Homer, that the practice of wearing loin-cloths in athletic contexts belongs to the most ancient Greek tradition. The Greeks themselves, he says, have abandoned it and now compete completely naked, but the Romans still preserve the original Greek custom.) After the athletes come troops of dancers, divided by age into three groups: men, adolescents and boys. Their dancing is accompanied by auletes who play small *auloi* of an antique design—as they still do, says Dionysius, in our own time—and by lyre-players playing seven-stringed lyres veneered with ivory, and what he describes as *ta kaloumena barbita*, ‘the instruments called *barbita*’, which are the long-armed, deep-pitched lyres we see quite often in sixth- and fifth-century Greek vase paintings, especially in scenes with Dionysus and his satyrs. I suppose that Dionysius refers to them in this round-about way because they may be unfamiliar to his Greek readers; though they belong to the Greek tradition, he says, the Greeks no longer use them, but the Romans still do so ‘in all their ancient ceremonies of sacrifice’.

After describing the dancers’ costumes, Dionysius identifies their movements, in the quick, four-beat rhythm known as prokeleusmatic, as those of a war-dance, and he identifies this, in turn, with the Greek war-dance called the *pyrrhichē*—a very ancient Greek institution, he says, tracing it back to either the gods’ celebrations after the defeat of the Titans or the noisy dances of the Curetes when they were guarding the infant Zeus. Those alleged origins are at least of the right sort for a vigorous war-dance, but they suffer from the disadvantage of being obviously mythical; and we are bound to judge that Dionysius’ next attempt to prove its Greek origins, by quoting verses from *Iliad* 18, is also a failure. The passages he quotes describe dance-scenes depicted on the shield made by Hephaistos for Achilles, but the dancing shown there could hardly be less like a war dance. It is in fact one of the emblems of a city living happily in peace. I find it puzzling that he is content with such a feeble way of supporting his claim that the war-dance has Greek ancestry, and it is hard to believe that his contemporaries found it convincing. One might suggest that he was simply unable to find evidence by which the Roman war-dance could legitimately be linked to Greek antiquity, and hoped instead to bamboozle his readers with legends of the gods and appeals to the authority of Homer, but in that case it is hard to see why he was pushed into this corner; there is no

shortage of allusions to war-dances in classical Greek literature, any of which would have served his purpose perfectly well.

Dionysius also finds evidence of Greek origins in the people who followed the war-dancers. They were dressed as Silenoi and satyrs, and danced the Greek satyr-dance called the *sikinnis*, and they made fun of the 'serious' movements of the war-dancers by imitating them in a grotesque way. Dionysius asserts that satyr-dancing and mockery of this sort takes place in a number of Roman settings, including the triumph, in which soldiers sing rude songs about their victorious general, and that it is done most of all at the funerals of wealthy men; but its origins, he insists, are Greek. He cites only one rather loosely specified Greek precedent, however, 'those who ride in wagons in processions at Athens', and then adds that he's afraid he would bore his readers if he added more evidence to support this assertion, since it is a *homologoumenon pragma*, something that is universally agreed to be true. This is the sort of thing that writers are often inclined to say when evidence for their case is lacking, and we are entitled to be a little sceptical about his sincerity.

After these satyric dancers came large numbers of lyre-players and auletes, on whom Dionysius makes no comment, and they are the last musicians to be mentioned in this passage. They are, in fact, almost the last members of the procession, followed only by the people who carry the sacred objects—censers containing burning incense, vessels made of silver and gold, and finally the images of the gods, who are represented in the same way as those of the Greeks. There are quantities of them, many of whom Dionysius identifies by name; they include the twelve Olympians, their precursors in the previous generation of gods, lesser divinities such as the Muses and the Graces who came into being after the Olympians, and heroes like Herakles, the Dioscuri and Pan, who were given divine status after their bodily deaths. It follows, says Dionysius, that the Romans who founded this festival cannot have been *barbaroi*, since plainly they worshipped all the gods of the Greeks and none of any other nation.

Anyone who reads the whole chapter straight through is likely to get the impression of a splendid and spectacular event, much more elaborate than the others of which Dionysius approves, and one that has abandoned the archaic simplicity of events like Romulus' triumphal procession. But in one important sense that is an illusion. If we consider each of the procession's components individually, none of them has features which Dionysius criticizes elsewhere; such things as war-dances and satyric mockeries fit perfectly well into his image of a simple ancient tradition, uncorrupted by luxury and over-sophistication. In any case, his major theme in this passage is different. The point that stands out most clearly is that he is using the description as a

major set-piece to underpin his thesis about the Greek origins of Rome and the Romans. In the previous chapter, in fact, he explicitly tells us that this is his purpose here, adding a significant twist. Some people might suppose, he says, that the Greek elements found in Roman practices date only from the time after the Roman conquest of Greece. Dionysius scoffs at the idea. One cannot believe, he points out, that the Romans would have suppressed their own ancestral traditions and substituted those of an alien people they had recently conquered; and we may be reminded of cases mentioned earlier, like the Phrygian rituals of Cybele, in which they had explicitly refused to do so. But just in case anyone remains unconvinced, says Dionysius, he will provide evidence from a period long before the conquest of Greece. Claiming the authority of Quintus Fabius Pictor is an integral part of his strategy, since Quintus is a historian who wrote before the Roman conquest, and whose history ended with the second Punic War. His writings therefore cannot have been contaminated by any knowledge of post-conquest innovations.

Our survey has shown that Dionysius uses references to music for two main purposes: to help in establishing the Greek lineage of the Romans and their customs, and to promote the view that civilization is at its best when it is characterized by simplicity and restraint; and these two objectives are linked to one another by their shared appeal to the virtues of the ancestral tradition.⁹ In the light of these conclusions, most of the initially surprising absences which we noted at the beginning of my paper are easily understood. Dionysius' profile of the unassuming musical traditions brought to Italy from Greece has no place for large-scale public genres such as dithyramb and drama or the *nomoi* performed by professional soloists, or for allusions to the works of famous composers, either of which would disrupt the impression he is trying to create. I would suggest also that his reticence about Plato's theory of musical *ēthos*, though he certainly knew about it, is similarly motivated, along with the absence from his history of any explicit reference to Greek philosophers or other intellectuals. Even when he is plainly echoing Plato, as in his comments on the institutions of Romulus, he doesn't say so; he presents them as aspects of an ancient tradition, originating in the untutored good sense of an honourable and morally upright leader. Sophisticated intellectualism of any

9 The survey is of course incomplete, but nothing in the remaining passages casts doubt on these conclusions. The most important of them are II.70-71 and III.32, which present quite detailed accounts of the activities of the Salii; the former is also the occasion of another of Dionysius' rather unconvincing attempts to show that a Roman practice has Greek origins. Much has been written on the Salii; see most recently Alonso Fernández 2016, especially 314-319; Alonso Fernández 2017.

sort, like elaborate styles of music, is completely alien to the image of an admirable Roman culture, firmly grounded in the *patrioi ethismoi* of the Romans' Greek ancestors, which Dionysius is trying to impress on his Hellenic readers.

A brief postscript. If any readers are wondering how Aeneas and his Trojan followers fit into Dionysius' Hellenizing picture of Rome's origins, I am happy to inform them (on the authority of I.61-62) that the Trojans too are Greeks, who like some of the other groups came originally from Arcadia.¹⁰

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10 The idea is considerably older than Dionysius. For discussions of the Aeneas legend in this context, see Gruen 1992, 6-51, and Vanotti 1995.

Music, Sexuality and Stagecraft in the Pseudo-Vergilian *Copa*

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Abstract

The Pseudo-Vergilian *Copa* ('The Female Tavern-Keeper') opens with the eponymous character dancing 'drunkenly' and 'sexily' to the rhythms of the castanet. Her performance, which is accompanied by several other musical instruments, sets the scene for a brief, yet richly detailed, vignette describing the attractions of a rustic Roman tavern. This paper examines how the poet uses music to (re)construct the *Copa*'s sensory world. The dancing tavern-keeper is a complex literary creation, which incorporates influences from both the elegiac and pastoral traditions as well as from contemporary visual culture. Moreover, her characterisation as an erotic, exotic entertainer invites comparisons between the tavern, the dining-room and the theatre as interactive performance spaces. The alluring dancers and musicians who performed in these venues inspired a number of poetic depictions in the early imperial period, and the commonalities between these depictions can in turn shed valuable light on our poem and its elusive protagonist.

Keywords

dance – tavern – sexuality – mime

Introduction

The *Copa*, a thirty-eight line elegiac poem preserved in the *Appendix Vergiliana*, opens with the description of a rambunctious musical performance.¹ Whisked

1 A preliminary version of this paper was given at the Symposium Cumanum 2016, held at the Villa Vergiliana on the subject, 'Music in the Time of Vergil'. I wish to thank the organiser,

away from the hustle and bustle of Rome, we find ourselves standing at the threshold of a country motel, populated by weary travellers seeking refreshment and cheap thrills. As we peek behind by the curtains, we catch a glimpse of the barmaid at work. She cuts an attractive figure, her hair neatly tied up in a bandana and her voluptuous curves swaying sensuously as she moves. Entertainment is her forte. A specialist erotic dancer, her mesmerising steps and noisy castanets lure in punters from the roadside.

The *Copa's* 'smoky tavern' (*fumosa...taberna*, 3) is awash with sensory enticements. There is an array of cheeses, fruits and nuts to satisfy the gourmand (17-22), perfumes and scents to excite the nostrils (*bene olentia*, 35), board games to stimulate the mind and the touch (*pone...talos*, 37), and 'supple girls' offering kisses to randy strangers (*formosum tenerae decerpens ora puellae*, 33). Embedded within this rich sensorium is a dynamic soundscape. Music brings the *Copa's* world to life, from the pulsating rhythms of the 'castanet' (*crotalo*, 2) to the piercing tones of the 'reeds' (*calamos*, 4) and the soothing melodies of 'lyres' (*chordae*, 7), the 'pipe' (*tibia*, 7) and the 'pan-flute' (*fistula*, 8). In addition to the five explicit references to musical instruments in the opening ten lines, the tavern is pervaded by a polyphony of sounds from the natural landscape: the tranquil hum of babbling rivers (*crepitans rauco murmure rivus aquae*, 12) and the 'incessant song' of cicadas bursting through the trees (*cantu crebro rumpunt arbusta cicadae*, 27).

This profusion of musical imagery is just one of many features which make the *Copa* both an intriguing and perplexing subject of study.² What inspired a poet of the Roman Empire to write an elegy about a humble tavern and its proprietor? And how would readers have responded to her depiction as a sexy artiste? On the one hand, the portrayal of the dancing barmaid possesses an intimacy and vibrancy that would seem to indicate a close familiarity with the musical life of the 'real' Roman *taberna*. Many of the *Copa's* modern readers, to be sure, have sought to extrapolate from its descriptive details information about the social and cultural practices of this elusive establishment. On the other hand, the history of the *taberna* is (and was) never clear-cut. Our understanding is dependant largely upon the observations of a small clique of elite

Professor Timothy Moore, and all the participants at the conference for their invaluable comments and suggestions.

2 The bibliography on the *Copa* is remarkably extensive. The main studies and editions are helpfully listed by Tarrant 1992, 331, n. 1; further works to be included are Morelli 1912, McCracken 1932, Zarri 1974, Franzoi 1988, Cutolo 1990, Kershaw 1992, Rosivach 1996, Grant 2001, Henderson 2002, Steures 2003, and Merkle 2005. I have adhered to the text of the *Copa* edited by Clausen et al. 1966.

authors who looked upon public leisure spaces with a marked ambivalence.³ As a focal Roman ‘pleasure zone’, the *taberna* was caught up in a myriad of allusions, illusions, collusions and delusions, which, when combined, produce a distorting impression of what really went on within its walls. While many looked down upon the tavern as the place where urban popular culture expressed itself most viscerally—the stereotypical haunt of the *plebs sordida*, to be avoided at all costs—others could imagine it as an idyllic haven where one’s deepest fantasies were made real. Both of these conceptions, though seemingly disparate, have a distinct role to play in configuring the *Copa*’s sensory world.

Music and dance had been associated with the convivial pleasures of sex and wine throughout antiquity, reaching back at least as far as the Homeric epics.⁴ The Classical Athenian sculptor Lysippus was still being celebrated in the first century AD for his depiction of a ‘drunken girl playing the pipes’ (*temulenta tibicina*), while a Greek dance known as the ὄρχησις παροίνιος (‘dance to accompany wine’ or ‘drunken dance’), performed traditionally by women at sympotic gatherings, is attested by both Athenaeus and Lucian.⁵ The sexual dynamics of musical performance found equally complex and far-reaching expressions in Roman literary and material culture. If we are to make sense of the *Copa*, we will therefore be required to look beyond the confines of the tavern itself, to the dimly-lit dining-rooms of the private *domus* and the bright lights of the public stage, where audiences rich and poor alike were treated to the finest performers that the Empire had to offer. Like the denizens of the *taberna*, these eye-catching entertainers (nearly always young women) elicited from our elite authors a powerfully divergent set of responses. In fact, as I will argue in this paper, the cultural intersectionality between the tavern, the triclinium and the theatre in many ways holds the key to understanding the characterisation of both the *Copa*’s protagonist and her workplace (tavern and tavern-keeper are not always easily distinguishable, as we shall see). The enduringly popular theatrical genres of mime and pantomime, which blurred the boundaries between reality and fiction, entertainment and excess, will offer a particularly revealing frame of reference through which to

3 See especially Toner 1995, 73–77, and 2009, 109–10; Holleran 2012, 148–149.

4 cf., e.g., *Od.* 4.17–19, *Il.* 18.494–95.

5 Plin. *HN* 34.63; Athen. *Deipn.* 14.629f, Luc. *De Salt.* 34. An Attic krater from the fifth century BC (British Museum E38; Barker 1984, fig. 15) depicts what appears to be a musical scene from a symposium, in which a young man plays the *auloi* and an exotic-looking girl, wearing an elaborate headdress and a skimpy outfit, dances while accompanying herself with the *crotala*.

assess the relationship of the *Copa* to the erotic dancers depicted by contemporary (or near-contemporary) elegiac poets.

Music in the *Copa*: Interpretation and Reconstruction

The *Copa* first comes to our attention in the writings of two fourth-century grammarians, Charisius and Servius, both of whom ascribe the poem to Vergil. Servius locates the *Copa* more precisely in a list of Vergil's juvenilia, along with the other minor works now compiled in the *Appendix*.⁶ However, scholars have long resisted the notion of Vergilian authorship, and have preferred instead to regard the *Copa* as the work of an anonymous author who lived sometime in the century and a half after the foundation of the Principate.⁷ Idiosyncrasies of language, style and metre make it difficult to assign the poem to any specific period. Richard Tarrant's view that the *Copa* represents a product of the Flavian or Antonine age seems to me the most reasonable suggestion; the works of Martial, Statius and Juvenal will at any rate provide important comparanda at various points in our investigation.⁸

Let us return to the tavern's threshold, where we first meet our eponymous hostess advertising her wares. The woman's name, we are told in line 1, is *Surisca*, a Greek diminutive of the Latin feminine noun for 'Syrian' (*Syra*).⁹ Her foreign status is signified additionally by her 'Greek headdress' (*Graeca... mitella*, another striking diminutive noun). She is a dancer (*saltat*, 3), and a good one at that: 'skilled at moving her quivering hips to the accompaniment of the castanet' (*crispum sub crotalo docta movere latus*, 2), her performance bears the mark of her 'tipsy' and 'promiscuous' demeanour (*ebria... lasciva*, 3).¹⁰

6 Serv. *Comm. in Aen.* 1 *praef.*, ed. Thilo 1878, 1: *scripsit etiam septem sive octo libros hos: Cirin Aetnam Culicem Priapeia Catalepton Epigrammata Copam Diras*; Charis. *Art. Gram.* 1.63K, ed. Barwick 1925, 79, l. 5: *quamuis Vergilius librum suum Cupam [sic] inscripserit*.

7 Israel Drabkin's thesis in defence of Servius' attribution, published in 1930, stands as a final bastion against the *communis opinio*.

8 Tarrant 1992, 333.

9 As Goodyear (1977, 121) points out, *Surisca* may function as an ethnic rather than a nominal identifier, although the implication of Syrian nationality remains valid in either case. For Syria's association with taverns, cf. Lucil. fr. 123 Warmington (*caupona hic tamen una Syra*), Mart. 5.70.2-3 (*Syriscus | in sellariolis vagus popinis*).

10 Henderson (2002, 260) notes the 'clattering' onomatopoeic effect produced by the accumulation of *cr* and *ct* sounds in line 2.

The *copa*'s actions in line 4 are frustratingly difficult to construe. H.R. Fairclough in the Loeb edition renders the phrase *ad cubitum raucos excutiens calamos* as "tapping against her elbows a noisy tambourine", but this reading is far from secure.¹¹ If it is the *copa* herself who plays the *crotalum* in line 2—as is surely the case—the notion of her performing on the 'castanet' and the 'tambourine' simultaneously presents obvious choreographic difficulties. Wilamowitz posited a solution to the problem by interpreting *calami* as a synonym for *crotalum*, meaning that the same instrument is to be inferred from both lines, but this interpretation finds little support in the ancient sources.¹² There is, however, another alternative. If we take *ad* not with its adjacent word, *cubitum*, but with the final word of the line, *calamos*—thereby reading the phrase as *cubitum excutiens ad raucos calamos*—we are able to envisage the 'reeds' being played by another musician as an accompaniment to the *Copa*'s 'elbow-shaking'. Admittedly, rearranging the syntax in this way results in a rather awkward dislocation of the preposition from its object (*ad* + *calamos*); yet such a device was by no means anathema to Latin poets of the time.¹³ The advantage is that the verb *excutiens* ('shaking to and fro'; *OLD* s.v. 'excutio' 7b) can thus be coordinated effectively with *movere* in line 2. In both instances the phraseology specifies the energetic motion of a particular body part (elbow/hip) in time with the music of a particular instrument (castanet/'reeds').

But what instrument exactly is denoted by the *raucos calamos*? Again, the answer is not necessarily obvious. Textual and archaeological evidence confirms the prevalence of reed-based materials in the manufacture of both 'percussion' and 'woodwind' instruments in antiquity.¹⁴ Fairclough's suggestion of 'tambourine' is seemingly substantiated by the recent discovery of tambourine sticks from burial sites in the north-west of the Roman Empire, which have been identified by the excavator as direct equivalents to the *rauci calami*.¹⁵ However, the evidential basis for interpreting the *calami* as a type of percussion is limited to say the least. It is far more likely, according to

11 Fairclough 2000, 439.

12 Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1924, 2.311-315. All we have to go on is an entry in the *Suda* (Bekker 629) describing the κρόταλον as a 'split reed' (σχιζόμενος κάλαμος).

13 Housman (1937, 105), in his edition of Manilius, gives a long list of examples in which prepositions are ambiguously located; cf., e.g., *Culex* 205 (*in*); Manil. 1.245 (*in*); Hor. *Carm.* 4.1.19-20 (*prope*); Prop. 3.4.18 (*subter*); Tibull. 2.5.66 (*ante*); Lucr. 4.597 (*per*), 6.863 (*prope*); Stat. *Theb.* 5.362-4 (*super*).

14 See West 1992, 82-86; Mathiesen 1999, 163 and 182-204.

15 Steures (2003, 213-14) oddly assumes that the tambourine stick "is the only real musical instrument to be suggested so far", while conceding that the instruments uncovered in the excavation are actually made of wood rather than reed.

the majority of scholars, that we are dealing with a reed-pipe of some sort. Housman surely went a step too far in imagining the instrument to be the ‘bagpipes’ (*tibiae cum folliculo*) cherished, notoriously, by the Emperor Nero.¹⁶ The more straightforward explanation is that the ‘noisy reeds’ are a poetic substitute for the *tibiae*, the double pipes ubiquitous in Greco-Roman musical culture and renowned for their distinctly piercing tone.¹⁷ We know that the *Copa*’s tavern contains a *tibia*—the poet explicitly says so in line 7—and we know, too, that *calamus* (in both singular and plural forms) was favoured as an equivalent for *tibia* by a number of Augustan and post-Augustan writers.¹⁸

In fact, our sources emphasise the indispensability of the *tibia* in creating the sexually-charged, alcohol-fuelled atmosphere characteristic of dance performances in the Roman world. Horace’s *Epistle* 1.14 is a case in point. In a poem contrasting the peace and quiet of the countryside with the heady sensuality of the city, Horace imagines the scene of revelry inside a *taberna*. The life and soul of the party is the *meretrix tibicina*, ‘the pipe-playing prostitute’, who calls upon her listeners to leap about in time with her ‘noise’ (one is reminded of Lysippus’ *temulenta tibicina* statue).¹⁹ Propertius’ *Elegy* 4.8, similarly, describes a raunchy banquet-scene which features among its cast of entertainers a female castanet-player (*crotalistris*) and a male *tibicen*.²⁰ The two instrumentalists are accompanied by a dancing dwarf, who ‘claps his stunted hands in time to the boxwood pipes’ (*iactabat truncas ad cava buxa manus*, 4.8.42). The Propertian epithet *ad cava buxa* is probably the model for the *Copa*’s (*ad*) *raucos calamos*.²¹

Material culture gives a vivid impression of what these exuberant musical cabarets actually looked like. A remarkable mosaic (Figure 1) discovered in the early eighteenth century near Santa Sabina in Rome, dating from the second

16 Housman (1937, 105). Apart from Nero’s penchant for the instrument (cf. Suet. *Ner.* 54, Dio Chrys. *Or.* 71.9), information about the form and function of the Roman bagpipes is scarce.

17 On the raucous tone of the *tibia*, see Moore 2012, 53–54.

18 Cf. Catull. 63.22, Plin. *HN* 16.164, 16.169, Apul. *Met.* 11.9.6, Tert. *Anim.* 14; Goodyear 1977, 121–22.

19 Hor. *Ep.* 1.14.24–26: *nec vicina subest vinum praeberet taberna | quae possit tibi, nec meretrix tibicina, cuius | ad strepitum salias terrae gravis*. The word *strepitum* implies that she is playing a percussion instrument, presumably the *scabellum*, rather than the *crotala* as Mayer (1994, 209) proposes.

20 Prop. 4.8.39 (*Miletus tibicen erat, crotalistris Byblis*); cf. Macr. *Sat.* 3.14.4.

21 Prop. 4.8.41–42: *Magnus et ipse suos breviter concretus in artus | iactabat truncas ad cava buxa manus*. Merkle (2005, 110–11) is the latest in a long line of scholars to draw a connection between the poems.



FIGURE 1 *Banqueting scene with dancers and musicians; mosaic from S. Sabina, Rome. After Clarke 2003, 217, fig. 127.*

century AD, shows two women in diaphanous dresses dancing to the accompaniment of *tibicines* with *scabella* (percussive clappers) attached to their feet. The dancers sway their hips in seductive fashion while holding *crotala* in their hands, much as the *Copa* herself is said to do in line 2. There is a large amphora of wine pictured at the centre of the mosaic, served by a dwarf or a small slave wearing a tunic. The scene bears a striking resemblance to a fresco from the triclinium of the House of the Ephebe in Pompeii (Figure 2), in which a female pipe-player is shown playing music for a pair of lovers. Behind the couple there is a man carrying an amphora, and to the left of the painting we see what appears to be a dancing dwarf or pygmy. A female figure stands to the right of the lovers, stretching out her hands. According to some she represents a *copa* demanding money from her customers, but her movements could just as convincingly be interpreted as those of a *crotalistria* providing rhythmic support to the *tibicina*. The deterioration of the painting unfortunately prevents us from making out what instrument (if any) she is holding. A male *tibicen*, a pair of lovers, and an amphora of wine also figure prominently in a fresco from the peristyle of the House of the Physician in Pompeii, where they form part of a vibrant Nilotic scene showing pygmies fighting wild animals and dining under a large canopy (Figure 3).

The opening lines of the *Copa* therefore conjure up a musical scene that would have been recognisable, at least in essence, to a Roman audience versed in the literary and visual arts. Our multi-talented hostess is the undisputed star of the show. Supported by a (male?) *tibicen*, she executes a rhythmic, probably up-tempo, number for the entertainment of her customers. But, as John Henderson has underlined, her dance also prefigures and condenses the *copia*, the *copiousness*, of the tavern itself.²² Not only does she procure wine,

22 Henderson 2005, 260-61: "As we inventory the dance, the sensuous body of writing shimmers—with *figuralità*: it is not that the dancer presences her routine with prelusive



FIGURE 2 *Pair of lovers accompanied by a tibicena; fresco from the triclinium of the House of the Ephebe, Pompeii (1.7.10-12); in situ. After Varone 2001, 45, fig. 40.*



FIGURE 3 *Nilotic scene with pygmy couple, tibicena and amphora; fresco from the peristyle of the House of the Physician, Pompeii (VIII.5.24); Naples Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 113196. After Varone 2001, 29, fig. 24.*

entertainment and sex for her clientele, but she herself embodies these sensual pleasures through the physicality of her dancing—entertaining, intoxicating and arousing in equal measure. Her performativity rubs off on the world around her, as we discover when we finally get a glimpse of the *taberna*'s

promise of performative improvisation; her faceless preface figures the Image as the dance of writing, the erotics of metaphor". The term *copa* is etymologically related to *caupona* (a synonym for *taberna*); cf. Priscian, *Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum* ii.209.6 Keil, on Lucil. fr. 123.

interior. Having been promised wine and sex (both visually, *ebria... lasciva*, and verbally, *bibulo decubisse toro*, 6), the first thing that the worn-out traveller (*defessum*, 5) sees upon entry is a collection of 'wine-jugs' (*cyathi*), ornamental furniture (*topia et calybae... triclia*) and musical instruments (*tibia, chordae*) ordered in neat array. The tour continues at breathless pace, taking in all the sounds, sights, tastes and smells that the *Copa* has at her disposal. Her tavern is a "factory of sensuality" (as Henderson aptly puts it), "an oasis away from the exhausting heat, dust, and sweat of brute mundane labour", which caters for all seasons (*aestivo*, 5 and 29; spring flowers, 13-16; *autumnali... die*, 18), for all appetites (17-22), for party animals both human and asinine (*asellus*, 25-6).²³

Music and Genre in the *Copa*: Country Ballad or Pop Anthem?

Since the publication of James McCracken's article "The Originality of the *Copa*" in 1932, the question of historical 'realism' has dominated scholarly investigations of the poem, producing in turn some rather startling conclusions.²⁴ In the 1960s, Wilhelmina Jashemski inferred from a study of the archaeological remains of Pompeian *tabernae* that "it would not be surprising to find a Syrian *copa* at Pompeii".²⁵ Westendorp Boerma took Jashemski's argument a step further, suggesting on the evidence of the fresco from the House of the Ephebe (discussed above) that the poet had actually "lived in Campania" and "had seen with his own eyes a Syrian girl like ours dancing before a smoky tavern".²⁶ Mark Grant, likewise, surmises from a survey of Pompeian graffiti that the *Copa* was likely to have been written by a young man who regularly

23 Henderson 2005, 276.

24 McCracken (1932, 125) maintains that the *Copa* represents "a realistic depiction of something which the poet knew deeply". His eagerness to find a modern parallel for almost every detail in the poem has rightly come under scrutiny. In one of his more fanciful analogies, the *Copa Surisca* is likened to the "strolling singers and mandolin players" of the twentieth-century Italian *trattoria*, "who visit several inns at a single meal for the few coppers given them by the diners"! Wilkinson (1965) attempts an equally imaginative, yet arguably more justifiable, transposition of the poem "into terms of a modern pseudo-Tudor road-house".

25 Jashemski 1964, 347-8. Kleberg (1957, 117), likewise, cites the opening four lines of the *Copa* as proof that "la musique et la danse faisaient partie des distractions offertes à la clientele".

26 Westendorp Boerma 1976, 660.

frequented taverns and was inspired by the lewd messages that he found scribbled onto their walls.²⁷

Of course, given the intractable problems of authorship and dating, the task of contextualising the *Copa* is necessarily grounded in speculation. There is undoubtedly much to be gained from adopting a methodological framework which is sensitive to the poem's cultural as well as literary influences; reductive assessments to the effect that "the poet is not portraying reality, but the make-believe world of his dreams" are clearly unhelpful and should be avoided.²⁸ But the concept of 'historicity' also has its limits. It goes without saying that we know almost nothing about the musical life of the tavern beyond a few scraps of literary evidence.²⁹ Horace in his brief vignette of the tavern may hint indirectly at the use of the *tibia* as a form of entertainment, but he gives no explicit indication that the *meretrix tibicina* was actually a distinctive fixture of this historical setting as opposed to a literary construct born out of elite cultural stereotypes about popular leisure.³⁰

The musical content of the *Copa* needs to be treated with the same degree of caution. Even if we dismiss the fanciful idea that the poem was written with a 'Pompeian' setting in mind, we are still left with the problematic assumption that the poem represents "die Lebenswirklichkeit des Tanzes bis in die niedersten Bereiche der Unterhaltung".³¹ Whether or not ancient readers would have been familiar with the social realities of the *taberna* (an issue that is hotly contested in the scholarship), there is no reason to believe that they would have identified such a large instrumental ensemble (*crotalum*, *tibia*, *chordae* and *fistula*) as an axiomatic feature of this or indeed any other musical context. We can accept easily enough the notion that the *tibiae* and *chordae* were commonly used in combination to lend melodic direction to performances of dance in the Roman world.³² But the additional inclusion of the *fistula* presents a considerable obstacle. The *fistula* is associated most prominently with the quasi-mythical landscapes of Theocritus' *Idylls* and Vergil's *Eclogues*; hence

27 Grant 2001, esp. 131-32; for the kind of documents Grant is interested in, cf. *CIL* 4.8842, 9.2689, and 13.10018, 95.

28 As argued by Fairclough (2000, 375-6). Vincent Rosivach's study, "The Sociology of the *Copa*" (1996), represents something of a turning-point.

29 The relevant material is cited by Kleberg 1957, 117-18. For evidence of singing (and lyre-playing) in the tavern, cf. Phil. *Vit. Apol.* 4.39, 4.42; Sidon. 8.11.3, vv. 49-54; note also Apul. *Met.* 4.8.

30 See Toner 1995, 74.

31 Wille 1967, 199, making only passing reference to the *Copa*.

32 For the traditional combination of pipes and lyres in Roman musical ensembles, cf. Cic. *De Orat.* 3.197; Dion. Hal. *Rom. Ant.* 1.33.4, 7.72.5; Quint. 1.10.20.

the poet identifies it explicitly in line 10 as an instrument 'of the shepherd' (*pastoris*), played 'in the rustic fashion' (*rustica...more*).³³ The pastoral connotations of the *fistula* are further evinced by its setting 'beneath the Arcadian cave' (*Maenalio...sub antro*, 9).³⁴ This idyllic world of nymphs (*virgineo...Achelois*, 15) and streams (*rivus*, 12; *amne*, 15) seems a far cry from the gritty banality of the *fumosa taberna* which sets the scene in the opening lines of the poem. Yet music and nature interact in tuneful harmony, the *raucos calamos* of the *tibia* (4) echoing the *rauco murmure* of the stream (12).³⁵ The allusion to the 'virgin daughter of Achelous' also carries with it a distinct musical resonance. The association of the *virgo* and the *fistula* brings to mind the tale of the beautiful nymph Syrinx, whose metamorphosis into a reed gave the panpipes their name.³⁶ One is reminded, too, of those nefarious creatures the Sirens, begotten by the river-god Achelous himself, whose enchanting singing lured unsuspecting mariners to their deaths. It is perhaps only fitting, therefore, that the femme-fatale of our poem inflicts upon her listeners an aurally-induced 'death' of their own (*Mors aurem vellens 'vivite' ait, 'venio'*, 38).³⁷

Noting these mythological allusions does not, of course, preclude the possibility that the *Copa*'s readers actually did spend their downtime in the company of scantily-clad dancers playing the castanets. There is, by way of comparison, interesting evidence to suggest that the *fistula* played a role in the orchestral accompaniment of the pantomime, which may be indicative of a wider usage in Roman spectacle.³⁸ But to interpret the character of the *Copa* as a product or mirror of this 'reality' is to miss the essence of what her tavern is all about. After all, how is it that the *taberna* can function in Horace's worldview as the

33 The language of the *Copa* has particularly strong echoes of Vergil's Second *Eclogue*: the song of the shepherd Corydon contains an extended allusion to the *fistula* as an invention of Pan (ll. 31-38); cf. also *Ecl.* 2.9, *nunc viridis etiam occultant spineta lacertos*, with *Copa* 28, *nunc uaria in gelida sede lacerta latet*, and *Ecl.* 2.12-13, *cum raucis...sole sub ardenti resonant arbusta cicadis*, with *Copa* 27, *nunc cantu crebro rumpunt arbusta cicadae*.

34 Rosivach (1996, 609) elaborates on the significance of the Arcadian *locus amoenus* in relation to the *Copa*.

35 As Tarrant (1992, 337) observes, "down to the end of the Augustan period *calamus* or *calami* without qualification always refers specifically to pastoral song or poetry".

36 *Ov. Met.* 1.689ff.; cf. *Serv. Expl. in Verg. Buc.* 2.32: "... *Syringam Numpham, quae fugiens eius informatem in calamum versa est seu fistulam et amorem suum cantu delectabat*."

37 Cf. *Ov. Met.* 5.552; *Serv. ad Virg. Georg.* 1.9; *Aen.* 8.300. For the Sirens as daughters of Achelous and Terpsichore, the Muse of Dancing, cf. *Apoll. Rhod. Argon.* 4.895-96. The dancer with *crotalum* is a standard motif in funerary iconography: see Clarke 2003, 215-19.

38 Cf. *Luc. Salt.* 63, 68, 72; *Arnob. ad Nat.* 2.38; *Apul. Met.* 6.24. An imperial relief discussed by Ciotti 1950 appears to represent a musician who played panpipes in a pantomime show.

prototypical centre of urban plebeian life while being elevated in the *Copa* to a quasi-mythical pastoral paradise? Surely these two visions are irreconcilable? Yet it was the very marginality of the tavern—its existence at the juncture between public and private, political and social, lowbrow and highbrow—that defined its place in the Roman literary imagination. Disavowed by many as a den of corruption, drunkenness and debauchery, the tavern nevertheless remained a constant source of fascination to those in the upper echelons of society, who projected onto it their own fantasies and insecurities, hopes and fears. This ambiguity of the *taberna* as both *fumosa* (2) and *formosum* (33), a home for gods as well as mere mortals (*Ceres... Amor... Bromius*, 20; *tuguri custos*, 3; *Vestae*, 26), made it not only a dangerous space, a space that needed to be controlled and policed, but also a space to be fantasised about and desired.³⁹ The *Copa* activates both poles of the dichotomy. We never lose sight of the distinctive ‘Otherness’ that makes our hostess a suspicious character—a Siren, as it were—but we also eroticise and glamorize this ‘Otherness’ as a metonymic symbol of the tavern’s exotic allure. Those who come to the *Copa*’s establishment only to deplore its pleasures find themselves speedily evicted from the premises: *a pereat cui sunt prisca supercilia!* (34)

Dancing like a Syrian Showgirl: The *Copa*’s Life beyond the Tavern

In a typically colourful anecdote from his *Life of Nero*, Suetonius describes a bizarre ‘open-air’ spectacle devised for (or by?) the emperor as a means of passing time whenever he set sail from Rome. As he stood on the deck of his cruise-ship and looked out onto the surrounding vista, Nero was presented with (what must have been familiar to him as) a lavishly decorated stage-set. A row of pubs (*diversoriae tabernae*), makeshift yet remarkably lifelike, stood at convenient stopping-points along the banks of the Tiber. Each one possessed its very own *copa*, skilled temptresses whose sole responsibility was to seduce the emperor as he sailed by with a cheeky wink here, a wolf-whistle there. They were not real *copae*, of course; that would not be in keeping with the charade. No, they were actors, and not just any actors: Nero had employed the most

39 Seneca (*Vit. Beat.* 7.3) associates wine and perfume (*mero et unguento madentem*) with ‘places that fear the aedile’ (*loca aedilem metuentia*); on the policing of the tavern, see Robinson 1992, 135–8. For the tavern as a place of nostalgia and fantasy, see Purcell 1996, 202–3; Edwards 1997, 86.

aristocratic ladies in the capital in the most degrading role he could dream up for them.⁴⁰

Suetonius' anecdote includes the only other attestation of the *copa* in the extant corpus of Latin literature. Certainly, the depiction of Nero's *matronae* in the act of soliciting sex (as the verb *appelleret* surely implies) conjures up an image not dissimilar to that of the *lasciva copa* "offering herself for the passerby's pleasure".⁴¹ It is interesting, too, that the *copae* in Suetonius' narrative are linked with the prostitutes (*scorta*) and dancing-girls (*ambubaiae*) who, we have just been told, were hired to serve as waitresses at Nero's extravagant dinner-parties in the Campus Martius and Circus Maximus.⁴² The association of these three (exclusively female) professional groups—all actors in an elaborate Neronian *mise-en-scène*—reflects in many ways the multifaceted nature of the *Copa*'s own vocation: she is not only a dispenser of wine and food, but also "an entertainer" who is "sexually available".⁴³

In fact, the *Copa* and the *ambubaia* have more in common than one might think. Deriving their unusual name from the Syrian word for 'pipe' (Aramaic *abbub* or *abbuba*), the *ambubaiae* titillated audiences across Rome with their racy dance routines set to popular tunes from the East.⁴⁴ Their starring role at the Emperor's parties says much about their desirability as both sex icons and musical virtuosi. But it also says much about their notoriety as cultural 'aliens', who were held responsible by aristocratic moralists for importing the 'effeminate' (*effeminata*) musical styles popular at the time among Roman audiences.⁴⁵ Horace has the *ambubaiae* appear as mourners at the funeral of the playboy musician Tigellius, in a cortege including such lowlifes as beggars,

40 Suet. *Ner.* 27: *quotiens Ostiam Tiberi deflueret aut Baianum sinum praeternavigaret, dispositae per litora et ripas diversoriae tabernae parabantur insignes ganea et matronarum institorio copas imitantium atque hinc inde hortantium ut appelleret.*

41 Rosivach (1996, 612-613), noting that "[the *copa*] is, after all, running something akin to a brothel".

42 Suet. *Ner.* 27: *cenitabatque nonnumquam et in publico, naumachia praeclusa vel Martio campo vel Circo Maximo, inter scortorum totius urbis et ambubaiarum ministeria*; cf. Suet. *Tib.* 42.4 (*nudis puellis ministrantibus cenaretur*).

43 Purcell 1996, 204. On the cultural assimilation of tavern-keepers and erotic dancers, see Wiseman 1998, 73.

44 Schol. Hor. *Sat.* 1.2.2: *ambubaiae dicuntur mulieres tibicinae lingua Syrorum. Etenim Syris tibia sive symphonia ambubaia dicitur*. They are attested almost exclusively in the period from Augustus to Hadrian; see Gowers 2012, 90-91 for more. Fear (1991, 79) regards the *Copa Surisca* as "the most famous example" of an *ambubaia*.

45 Quint. *Inst. Orat.* 1.10.31; cf. Ov. *Rem. Am.* 751-5, Prop. 2.22.4-6.

drug-peddlers, mime-actresses and clowns.⁴⁶ Petronius' Trilamchio even uses *ambubaia* as a derogatory term in mockery of his wife's servile origins and sexual promiscuity.⁴⁷

By targeting the figure of the Syrian dancer-cum-prostitute, these authors were tapping into deep-seated feelings of anxiety and resentment about Syrian culture and its assimilation into Roman society.⁴⁸ Juvenal famously bemoans the fact that 'the Syrian Orontes has for a long time now been polluting the Tiber, bringing with it its language and customs, its slanting strings and its pipe-players, its native drums too, and the girls ordered to offer themselves for sale at the Circus'.⁴⁹ It is generally assumed that Juvenal is referring here to the presence of Syrian prostitutes in the brothels and taverns concentrated around the Circus Maximus; no doubt this is partly the implication of the phrase *iussas prostare*.⁵⁰ But what about the Syrian girls who were to be found inside the Circus itself? It was here, after all, that Nero would come to witness his *ambubaiae* perform. The travelling *ludii* ('dancers?') who appeared at Augustus' banquets also came *ex circo*.⁵¹ Juvenal alludes in another poem to the appearance of *puellae* on the stage and, in a detail reminiscent of the *Copa*, singles out their sexy gyrations and shimmies on the dance-floor as 'a stimulant to jaded desire and a prickly goad to the cock' (*inritamentum veneris languentis et acres ramitis urticae*).⁵² It is quite possible that these girls were categorised more widely as *ambubaiae*: their hometown of Gades (the modern Spanish town of Cádiz) was said to have been founded by Syrians.⁵³

46 Hor. Sat. 2.1.1-3: *ambubaiaiarum collegia, pharmacopolae, | mendici, mimae, balatrones, hoc genus omne | maestum ac sollicitum est cantoris morte Tigelli*. The Tigellius described by Cicero (*ad Fam.* 7.24.2) as a 'good pipe-player and a decent singer' (*bellum tibicinem... et sat bonum cantorem*) may be the same man, although there is some debate surrounding this issue.

47 Pet. Sat. 74: "*Quid enim?*" inquit "*ambubaia non meminit se de machina?*"

48 Isaac 2004, 336-37. For both Apuleius (*Met.* 8.24) and Lucian (*Dea Syria* 44), the *crotala* were synonymous with the ecstatic rituals of the *dea Syria* cult. See also Naerebout (2007, 151-57) on responses to the Emperor Elagabalus as a 'Syrian' dancer.

49 Juv. Sat. 3.62-5: *iam pridem Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes | et linguam et mores et cum tibicine chordas | obliquas nec non gentilia tympana secum | vexit et ad circum iussas prostare puellas. | ite, quibus grata est picta lupa barbara mitra*.

50 See, e.g., Braund 1996, 185.

51 cf. Suet. *Aug.* 74.

52 Juv. Sat. 11.162-64: *forsitan expectes ut Gaditana canoro | incipiant prurire choro plausuque probatae | ad terram tremulo descendant clune puellae*; cf. Prop. 2.22.1-10.

53 A scholiast on Juv. Sat. 11.162 makes the Syrian connection explicit: *id est, speras forsitan, quod incipiant saltare delicatae ac pulchrae puellae Syriae, quoniam de Syris et Afris Gades condita est*. For the Roman identification of Carthaginians/Phoenicians as Syrians,

By the time of Horace, the exotic attraction of the *Gaditanae* had become almost proverbial.⁵⁴ In Statius' reimagining of a theatrical spectacle in the Domitianic period, 'the cymbals and jingling Gades' (*cymbala tinnulaeque Gades*) provide the soundtrack to the dancing of 'Syrian troupes' (*agmina Syrorum*) and 'buxom showgirls from Lydia' (*Lydiae tumentes*); lest we be left with any doubt about the sexual availability of these foreign starlets, we are assured by the poet that their services are 'easily bought' (*faciles emi*).⁵⁵ The razzle-dazzle of Flavian show-business left its mark on Martial, too. One of his *Epigrams* is devoted to a slave-girl called Telethusa, who was 'skilled at performing lascivious gestures to Baetican castanets and dancing to tunes from Gades'.⁵⁶ We reencounter the (same?) dancer Telethusa on two occasions in the *Carmina Priapea*, an anonymous anthology thought to have been composed like the *Copa* sometime in the first or early second century AD.⁵⁷ Here, her bare buttocks (*clunem tunica tegente nulla*, 19.2) and sinuous thighs (*fluctuante lumbo*, 19.4) mark her out as one of the (in)famous girls making a living in Rome's red light district (*nota Suburanas inter Telethusa puellas*; 40.1).

There is another poem in the *Priapea* that commands our attention. It is dedicated to a girl named Quintia, 'the people's darling' (*deliciae populi*), who had shot to fame as a dancer 'in the great circus' (*magno... circo*).⁵⁸ In addition to the parallels evoked by the poem's brevity and metre, Camillo Morelli among others has noted how the formula praising Quintia's skill in line 2, *vibratas docta movere nates*, bears an uncanny resemblance to the second line of the

see Lucil. 15.540-1 (*Syrophoenix*); Juv. Sat. 8.159-61 (*Syrophoenix... Syrophoenix*); Stat. Silv. 4.5.29-48; Dio Chrys. Or. 33.41; Isaac 2004, 327-346.

54 cf. Hor. Od. 2.2.10-11, Juv. Sat. 10.1-2; Fear 1991.

55 Stat. Silv. 1.6.67-71: *hic intrant faciles emi puellae, | hic agnoscitur omne quod theatris | aut forma placet aut probatur arte. | hoc plaudunt grege Lydiae tumentes, | illic cymbala tinnulaeque Gades, | illic agmina confremunt Syrorum.*

56 Mart. 6.71.1-2: *edere lascivos ad Baetica crumata gestus | et Gaditanis ludere docta modis*; cf. Mart. 14.203, 3.63.5, 5.78.26-28. A 'dancer from Asia' is the subject of a love poem attributed to the Augustan epigrammatist Automedon (*Anth. Gr.* 5.129); also notable is *Anth. Gr.* 9.139.1-2, a late-antique epigram possibly modelled on the opening lines of the *Copa*: *Μαχλὰς ἐὺκροτάλοισιν ἀνευάζουσα χορείαις, | δίζυγα παλλομένοισι τινάγμασι χαλκὸν ἀράσσει*, 'the wanton, accompanying her dance with shrill shrieks and castanets, beats the brazen clappers together with quivering movements' (Loeb trans.).

57 Editions of the *Priapea*, with helpful translation and commentary, are available in various languages: Goldberg 1992, Hooper 1999, Bianchi 2001, Callebat 2012.

58 *Priapea* 27, ed. Buecheler 1917, 142. For the identification with the Circus Maximus, see Callebat 2012, 152-53.

Copa (and notably also to Martial's phrase *edere lascivos... gestus... docta*).⁵⁹ We get the same close-up of the dancer's body, the same sensuous gestures, even the same musical accompaniment: Quintia dedicates a set of castanets (*crotala*, 2), as well as the *cymbala* and *tympanum*, as votive offerings to the god Priapus, in the hope of guaranteeing her status as the crowd's favourite (*ut semper placeat spectantibus orat*, 5). The designation of these percussion instruments as *pruriginis arma*, literally 'the weapons of lasciviousness', points towards a further connection with the *lasciva Copa*, who is herself shown paying respect to Priapus and his 'huge groin' in lines 23–24 (*est tuguri custos armatus falce saligna | sed non et vasto est inquine terribilis*).

One of the main platforms for erotic dancers like Quintia and Telethusa was the mime, an enduringly popular theatrical genre throughout the republican and imperial periods with links to the *ambubaiae* (cf. Hor. *Sat.* 2.1.1–2, above). Elaine Fantham and J.C. McKeown demonstrated several decades ago the profound influence of the mime on the Augustan elegists.⁶⁰ As well as drawing attention to some important ancient testimonies for elegiac works being adapted for performance on stage—Ovid himself proclaimed that 'my poems are also often danced before the people' (*Tr.* 2.519–20)—Fantham and McKeown identified an underlying commonality between elegiac narratives and the plotlines of the so-called 'Adultery-Mime', which dramatized sexual escapades in an often crude and outlandish fashion. Several writers, perhaps significantly, ascribe to the mime the distinctive quality of *lascivia*.⁶¹ The mime was also a highly musical art form. Cicero's comment on the use of *scabella* to signal the *exitus mimi* may hold the key to explaining the prominence of percussion instruments in elegiac depictions of erotic dancers.⁶² The significance of the Circus Maximus as the home of Quintia and Nero's *ambubaiae* may also

59 Morelli (1912, 235) regards this as a parody of the *Copa*. Extant funerary inscriptions in honour of female stage-performers often include a formula praising their artistic skill: cf. *CIL* 3.10501 (*artibus edocta*), 6.10096 (*docta erodita*), 6.10127 (*artis omnium erudita*), 6.25808 (*eruditae omnibus artibus*), 9.3122 (*quae me omnes artes docuit*). Hemelrijk (1999, 83) has highlighted the importance of musical accomplishment and dancing as attributes of the *docta puella* idealized by the Augustan poets: cf. Prop. 1.2.27–8, 1.3.42, 2.1.9–10, 2.3.17–20, 2.22.4–6; Ov. *Am.* 2.4.25–32, 2.11.31–2, *AA* 3.315–28, 3.349–52; Hor. *Od.* 3.9.10.

60 McKeown 1979 and Fantham 1989.

61 Cf. Ov. *Fast.* 5.331, Macr. *Sat.* 2.7.1, August. *De civ. D.* 6.7 (noting the role of Priapus in the mime).

62 Cic. *Cael.* 65: *mimi ergo exitus non fabulae: in quo cum clausula non invenitur, fugit aliquis e manibus, dein scabilla [sic] concrepant, aulaeum tollitur*. In the so-called 'Charition Mime' (*P.Oxy.* III 403), the sole surviving text of a Roman mime play preserved on an Egyptian papyrus from the mid-second century AD, percussive 'sound effects' may have been

reflect this venue's association with the *Ludi Florales*, the annual springtime festival held in Rome in honour of the goddess Flora. Her temple was located in the immediate vicinity, and it was probably in the Circus that the festival's notorious female mime-artists gave their lewd performances.⁶³

Closer examination of the mime reveals some intriguing points of connection with the *Copa*. For a start, the *taberna* seems to have been a common dramatic setting. Propertius' *Elegy* 4.8, noted for being not only one of the *Copa*'s prevailing models but also one of the works most strongly influenced by the 'Adultery-Mime', climaxes with two prostitutes escaping to a nearby tavern (*excipit obscurae prima taberna viae*, 62; cf. 19).⁶⁴ Furthermore, the *Copa*'s headdress, the *mitra*, matches the one worn in Ovid's *Fasti* (3.669) by Anna Perenna, the goddess whose festival, like Flora's, was renowned for its mimes. The celebrated mimographer of the first century BC, D. Laberius, wrote a play called *Anna Perenna*, of which the sole surviving fragment, *conlabella osculum* ('give me a kiss on the lips'), finds a notable parallel in the *Copa*'s line 33, *formosum tenerae decerpens ora puellae* ('tear with bites the beautiful lips of a supple girl').⁶⁵ The title *Surisca* also calls to mind the name of Laberius' great rival, Pubilius Syrus, 'the Syrian'; Laberius himself is actually said to have dressed up as a Syrian character in one of his productions.⁶⁶

The mime's ever-popular sister genre, the pantomime, may have less to tell us, given that its dancers were more or less exclusively male.⁶⁷ Yet the stagecraft of the *pantomimus* accentuated the erotics and semiotics of the dance in a uniquely conspicuous way, and for this reason it warrants brief consideration. The two genres of mime and pantomime were, after all, closely related and as such are often conflated in our sources. The pantomime was noted in particular

inserted into the drama at various points to accentuate moments of tension or climax; Skulimowska 1966, 177.

- 63 Cf. Ov. *Fast.* 5.189-90; Wiseman 1998, 71 and 2002, 293. On Flora's *mimae*, cf. Val. Max. 2.10.8, Sen. *Ep.* 97.7, Mart. 1 Praef.; note also Lucr. 4.973-983.
- 64 McKeown 1979, 74-5. For similar 'mimic references' in the inn scene at Apul. *Met.* 1.7ff., see May 2006, 136-139. One of Ennius' lost comedies, though not strictly a mime, bears the title *Caupuncula*, 'The Little Tavern-Keeper' (Nonius 155.30, Warmington fr. 381).
- 65 Nonius 90.22 Mueller; cf. Gellius 16.7.10; Wiseman 1998, 72-3.
- 66 Macr. *Sat.* 2.7.4. On Pubilius Syrus, cf. Macr. *Sat.* 2.7.6-8. Characters in the *comoedia palliata*, (and perhaps in the mime too) were often named Syrus or Syra: cf. Plaut. *Bacch.* 649-50, Merc. 808, Truc. 405-6; Ter. *Ad. passim*, Eun. 722, HT *passim*, Hec. 59; Pet. *Sat.* 52 (*Syrum histrionem*); Rosivach 1996, 606.
- 67 Our understanding of the *pantomimus* has been advanced particularly in the last ten years following the publication of Lada-Richards 2007, Webb 2008, and Hall & Wyles 2008. Starks (2008) discusses possible evidence for female *pantomimae*.

for its use of large orchestral accompaniments, including the *cithara*, *tibia*, *fistula* and *scabella*.⁶⁸ Its mute soloist, moreover, attracted negative attention for his overtly feminine style of performance, which many moralists equated with the *licentia* of the genre as a whole.⁶⁹ Quintilian, in a powerful extension of this idea, characterises the ‘effeminate’ (*effeminatum*) and ‘spineless’ (*enervem*) *compositio* of contemporary orators as the kind that ‘dances to the very lascivious tunes of the castanet’ (*lascivissimis syntonorum modis saltat*).⁷⁰

I would like to bring our discussion to a close by comparing one final literary passage, ostensibly inspired by the pantomime, in which the themes of music, sexuality and stagecraft are closely intertwined. Book 10 of Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses* culminates in a narrative set-piece describing a dramatic production of *The Judgement of Paris* in the theatre of Corinth. All the characters in the production are played by dancers, with the role of Venus assigned to the leader of the troupe:

There stood a mountain made of wood, crafted with exceptional workmanship to resemble the famous Mount Ida of which the poet Homer sang. It was planted with greenery and live trees, and from a hand-made spring at its summit it spouted a stream of water. . . . After [Juno and Minerva] another girl took to the stage, surpassingly beautiful in appearance, her ambrosial complexion indicating that she was representing Venus, as Venus looked when she was still a virgin (*cum fuit virgo*). She flaunted her perfect figure: her body was naked and uncovered except for a piece of sheer silk fabric which shaded her eye-catching private parts. At one moment an inquisitive little breeze would waft this garment aside in lascivious playfulness (*lasciviens*), so that it lifted to expose the flower of her youth; at another moment it would gust exuberantly against it, so that it clung tightly and graphically delineated her voluptuous curves. . . . Then, much to the delight of the spectators, Venus took her position right in the middle of the stage. She smiled sweetly, exuding charisma, and was surrounded by a crowd of the most cheerful little boys. . . . Now a pipe with many holes played tuneful melodies in the Lydian mode (*tibiae multiforabiles cantus Lydios dulciter consonant*); and while these tunes were charmingly caressing the spectators’ hearts, Venus herself—the most charming of all—started to move. Taking slow and gentle steps,

68 See note 38. On the musicality of the pantomime, cf. Macr. *Sat.* 2.7.18, Jerome *Chron. Ol.* 189.3, Lib. *Or.* 64.97, Cassiod. *Var.* 4.51.9; *P.Flor.* 16; Lada-Richards 2007, 41.

69 Lada-Richards 2007, 30; cf. Plin. *Paneg.* 46.4, Apul. *Apol.* 74.7.

70 Quint. *Inst.* 9.4.142.

her spine undulating smoothly and her head nodding ever so slightly, she began to walk forward, and to respond with subtle gestures to the soft accompaniment of the pipe (*mollique tibiae sono delicatis respondere gestibus*). She gesticulated with her glances, sometimes gently languid, sometimes sharply intimidating, and often she would dance with her eyes alone (*nonnunquam saltare solis oculis*).⁷¹

The scene unfolds in familiar fashion, the interplay between music and dance, sound and movement, shifting attention onto the sexualized female body. More startlingly, the performance is narrated by Apuleius in such a way that the realms of reality and fantasy are made to converge. The Homeric landscape of Mount Ida, replete with flora and fauna, functions as an elaborate stage-set for a pantomimic spectacle in the heart of the city, but at the same time the staging itself *becomes* Mount Ida—a ‘suspended reality’ within the ‘suspended reality’ that is the *Metamorphoses*. The same is true of the dancer playing the role of Venus: “no longer is a dancer dancing the role of a goddess so well that she might be mistaken for her, but the goddess dances herself, *in propria persona*.”⁷²

The *Copa* exhibits its own metamorphic properties. Our shapeshifting narrator constantly eludes our grasp, oscillating seamlessly between the authorial voice and the persona of the *Copa*. So, too, our vision of the *taberna* is filtered through the oppositional, yet complementary, lenses of its characters: the passer-by, the customer, and of course the hostess herself. In this way, we come to *inhabit* the *Copa* not just as readers but as a live audience, spectating from within the *scaena* like the *vivae arbores* on Apuleius’ Mount Ida. We imagine the undulating figure of the dancer as though present before our very eyes—the sense of immediacy heightened by the iteration of present-tense verbs (*sunt... est... est... sunt*)—and we hear her music ringing through our ears. Yet, try as we might to ‘own’ our ‘little Syrian’—to objectify and fetishize her like Martial’s Telethusa or Juvenal’s pin-up girls, mere ‘playthings’ for the well-to-do to enjoy as they please (*nugas*, Juv. *Sat.* 11.171; cf. Mart. *Ep.* 6.71.5-6)—we encounter constant reminders of the scene’s artificiality, reminders of the fact that this is all an elaborate mytho-literary façade constructed by and for the titillation and gratification of elite Roman male readers.

By tuning into the *Copa*’s music, we also tune into the various levels of representation and counter-representation which condition this ‘suspension of disbelief’. To reduce the dancer’s performance to a historical re-enactment is

71 Apul. *Met.* 10.30-32.

72 May 2008, 350; also 353ff.

to deprive it of its vital significance as a literary creation, manufactured not so much from lived experiences as from a complex synthesis of ideas, preconceptions and misconceptions. More than simply a 'dancer', a 'tavern-keeper' or a 'prostitute', the *Copa* is a composite of all three, whose music takes on the polyvalent cultural symbolism of both the *taberna* and the stage. Her cornucopia of delights may be too good to be true, but it is precisely the thrill of imagining ourselves among them, revelling in the sensory stimulation they provide, that keeps us coming back to her country motel and clamouring for an encore.

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Ambrosian Hymns

Evidence for Roman Music of Late Antiquity?

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Abstract

After the abortive attempts of the bishop Hilarius of Poitiers, Ambrosius, bishop of Milan, created with the *metrum Ambrosianum* the starting point for Latin Hymnody by using a familiar pagan meter, the *iambic dimeter*, as the basic line. Combining four such lines into a stanza he followed the type of the four-line stanzas of Horace. With eight such stanzas he found a model for Christian hymnody for centuries. The text of four of the innumerable Ambrosian hymns is attested for Ambrosius by Augustine. As the ancient notation fell into disuse in the 6th century AD, the melodies of the Ambrosian hymns were transmitted orally until the 10th century. They appear in the medieval manuscripts with neumatic or alphabetic notation, but without rhythmical values and adorned by rich melismata, which mirror the predilections of each monastic community. Five of them are attributed to Ambrosius, from which this inquiry has to begin.

Keywords

Ambrosian Hymns – *melismata* – metre – aequalistic or quantitative rhythm – notation – melodies.

Introduction

The last fragment of Ancient Greek Music, which is simultaneously the first specimen of Christian Church Music, is the well-known *Hymn to the Holy*

* This paper was presented at the conference of MOISA on 30.07.2015 in Newcastle UK.

Trinity, preserved on POXY 1786 (DAGM no. 59). It was written down on the threshold between the third and the fourth century AD. Its metrical and musical peculiarities as well as its literary and structural properties can be fully derived from pagan parallels of Ancient Greek Poetry and Music from the 2nd century BC to the 3rd century AD.¹ We face in POXY 1786 the last example of the type known as ‘citharodic monody’. The attempt of E.J. Wellesz to understand it as the missing link between Syriac hymnody and early Christian liturgic singing has been shown to be erroneous.² Metrical Latin Hymnody begins half a century later than the *Hymn to the Holy Trinity*, and its melodies are transmitted, if at all, in manuscripts after 1000 AD. Its earliest specimens are the melodies of the Ambrosian Hymns. In this paper I shall investigate the question whether the Ambrosian Hymns can give evidence for Roman Music of Late Antiquity.

1 The Metrics

After the discovery of the *Psalmus responsorius*³ it became evident that already in the 3rd century AD Christian congregations were singing in rhythmic prose. The *Psalmus* begins with a prayer (*hypopsalma*) in four lines. There follows an ABECEDARIUS, of which 11 stanzas of different length are preserved. The stanzas beginning with A, C-F and I have 7 lines, the stanza beginning with L has 8 lines, the stanzas beginning with B, H and K have 9 lines, and the stanza beginning with G has 11 lines. The number of syllables of the lines is variable. Sometimes two lines are coupled by rhyme. The rhythm of the lines exhibits the elements of the prosaic *cursor*.

But in the 4th century AD the traditionalism of the cultivated upper class grasped also the Christian hymnody, forcing upon it inherited classical metrics. The first poet to write Latin metrical hymns (*carmina*), of which only fragments are transmitted,⁴ was Hilarius, the bishop of Poitiers (315-367 AD), according to the *dictum* of Isidore (*Hymnorum carmine floruit primus*⁵). It is assumed that Hilarius was stimulated during his exile in Asia Minor to

1 West 1992b.

2 Wellesz 1945, see Pöhlmann 2016. For early Jewish and Christian liturgic singing see now Stapert 2007, Franz 2013, Smith 2011, Leonhard 2014.

3 Roca-Puig 1965; Speyer 1989, p. 64-69; Herzog 1989, p. 220.

4 J.F. Gamurrini 1887, Feder 1916.

5 Isidore, *De eccl. offic.* 1,6.

compose Latin hymns following the example of oriental hymnody.⁶ This does not hold good for the metres used: The three hymns which can be ascribed with confidence to Hilarius use ancient Greek metres, which also found their way to pagan Latin poetry. The first hymn (*Ante saecula qui manes*) is a mutilated ABECEDARIUS, 19 stanzas beginning with A-T. But Hilarius adopts for it the fourth asclepiadeic stanza,⁷ which is used by Horace twelve times. The second hymn (*Fefellit saevam verbum*) is again a mutilated ABECEDARIUS, 18 stanzas beginning with F-Z. Here Hilarius combines two iambic trimeters to a stanza. The third hymn (*Adae carnis gloriam*) has 10 stanzas, each of which consists of three trochaic tetrameters catalectic. Iambic trimeters and trochaic tetrameters, with the names *Senarius* and *Septenarius*, are most familiar in the poetry of the old Latin stage. Evidently the hymns of Hilarius were no success in Poitiers, as Hieronymus remarks: *Hilarius... in hymnorum carmine Gallos indociles vocat*.⁸ There are no melodies transmitted to these three hymns.

Hilarius of Poitiers had adopted for his hymns classical meters familiar to him from his education in literature, which was obligatory for the upper class in late antiquity. Ambrosius, bishop of Milan (339-397), found another way: by combining four iambic dimeters to a stanza he created the so called *Metrum Ambrosianum*. Eight such stanzas of four lines make up an Ambrosian hymn.

With the iambic dimeter Ambrosius adopted a metre which was flourishing in his time. Horace used the iambic dimeter, if at all, only in epodic systems, thus following Archilochus. In Seneca the metre appears only once, in a chorus, which consists wholly of iambic dimeters (*Agamemno* 759-774). The iambic dimeter did not become really popular until the second century AD. The last words of the emperor Hadrian (117-138) on his deathbed are a familiar example: *animula vagula blandula, / hospes comesque corporis, / quae nunc abibis in loca / pallidula rigida nudula, / nec ut soles dabis iocos*.⁹ Terentianus Maurus (2nd-3rd century) and Diomedes (4th century AD) inform us that the iambic dimeter was a favourite meter of the *Poetae neoterici* or *Novelli poetae*, a group of modernist poets in imperial times.¹⁰ According to Terentianus a

6 Thus Schanz 1914, 227 without argument: „Den Anstoß zur Hymnendichtung erhielt Hilarius sicher im Orient während seines Exils“.

7 Twice Glyconeus + Asclepiadeus.

8 Hieron. Comment. in Galatos II praef.

9 *Historia Augusta*, Spartian, Hadrian 25,9: *et moriens quidem hos versus fecisse dicitur*; Büchner 1982, p. 169.

10 Terentianus Maurus GLK VI p. 383 ff., 2528; Diomedes GLK I p. 516, 25, Schanz Vol. III (1959) 21-25.

certain Alphius Avitus (2nd century AD) wrote several books (*libros rerum excellentium*) about topics of Roman history in continuous iambic dimeters. There are fragments transmitted from Books I and II.¹¹ Another member of the *Novelli poetae* was Septimius Serenus (2nd century AD), the author of *Opuscula ruralia* in iambic dimeters, of which five fragments are transmitted.¹² The iambic dimeter could be used for occasional poetry also: Gellius tells us about a friend who translated *ex tempore* an epigram of Plato (III Page) *licentius liberiusque*, swelling it up to 17 iambic dimeters.¹³ A contemporary might be a certain Marianus and his *Lupercalia*, from which five iambic dimeters are transmitted.¹⁴ Ausonius (310-395) still uses the iambic dimeter for an epigram.¹⁵ In Greek poetry of imperial times however, the iambic dimeter is very rare.¹⁶

In Latin poetry of imperial times, the iambic dimeters show a tendency towards isosyllabism. The poem of Hadrian about his fluttering *animula* with its abounding resolutions is a special case, owing to its effortful pursuit of a pictorial effect.¹⁷ The dactyl or anapaest very seldom appears instead of the first or third iambus.¹⁸ Altogether, there prevails in these places the long *anceps* with 82 % of 116 cases, by contrast with 18 % with short *anceps*.¹⁹ The pagan iambic dimeters are used always in stichic series. There are no hints of the formation of stanzas. According to the transmitted titles, the poems in iambic dimeters were poetry for reading.

The treatment of the *syllaba anceps* in the iambic dimeters of pagan Latin poetry is faithfully preserved by Ambrosius. In the first and the third iambus of the hymns which are attested by Augustine for Ambrosius (see below p. 109 nr. 29-32), long *anceps* with 80 % of 256 cases prevails against 20 % with short

11 Terentianus Maurus GLK VI 2448: *ut pridem Avitus Alfius libros poeta plusculos usus dimetro perpeti conscribit excellentium*; Marius Victorinus GKL VI p. 137, 31: *apud nos metro continuo Alphius Avitus libros rerum excellentium fecit*. - Büchner 1982, 174 f.

12 Büchner 1982, pp. 175 ff.

13 Gellius 19,11; Büchner 1982, 171.

14 Büchner 1982, 175.

15 *Ogygia me Bacchum vocat*; XIII Epigrammata Nr. 12 Green.

16 West 1982, 165-167.

17 *Historia Augusta*, Hadrian 1: *animula vagula*; 4: *pallidula rigida*.

18 E.g. *Incerti Odarium*, Büchner 171, 6: *cucurrit ad labeas mihi*. 17: *ad puerum <ut> intus viverem*; Alphius Avitus, Büchner 175, 4 f.: *Exteraue muri ducere / spatiando paulatim trahit*.

19 Seneca: 25 against 7 cases; *Incerti odarium*: 28 against 4 cases; Alphius: 20 against 2 cases; Marianus: 10 cases of long *anceps*; Serenus: 9 against one case; altogether: 95 against 21 cases.

anceps.²⁰ We very seldom find the anapaest instead of the spondee.²¹ Thus, the metrical technique of Ambrosius in his hymns is as good as identical with the metrics of pagan poets in poems of iambic dimeters, with the sole exception of the introduction of strophes of four lines, as we shall see immediately. Thus, the Ambrosian line should be scanned like the pagan iambic dimeters, namely as $x - \cup - / x - \cup -$. Following Martin West,²² we can transcribe this into note values by representing the metrical short by a quaver, the metrical long by a crotchet and the *anceps* in the first and third iambus by the head of a note only. This means that the Ambrosian line is still a metre for reading. To transform it into an effective metre for song the preponderance of the long *incipitia* should have been reduced, as the rhythmical vagueness of the *incipitia*, which is easily tolerable in spoken poetry, should give way to a clear cut rhythm in song.²³

The beginning of the Christian Hymnody is accompanied with new features, which were aptly described by Bruno Stäblein: “As soon as sung Latin hymns appear, two peculiarities appear. The first is the *Iso-strophism*, which means that all stanzas have the same structure. The second is the *Iso-syllabism*, which means that the number of syllables of every line as a rule is the same.”²⁴

The use of the iambic dimeters by Ambrosius confirms this statement. Four iambic dimeters, which use the metrical technique of the pagan model, are strictly coupled to stanzas of four lines, which however do not appear in the texts or in their metrics, but are evident from the transmitted melodies and the presentation of the texts in the manuscripts. With the restriction to stanzas of four lines Ambrosius follows a standard of Horace, the so called *Lex Meineke*, which claims that in all odes of Horace the respective sum of lines is always a multiple of four.²⁵

Evidently, the reason for the striking success of the *Hymnus Ambrosianus* was not only the choice of a pagan metre popular in the time of Ambrosius, the iambic dimeter. No less significant was the fact that Ambrosius couples iambic dimeters to stanzas of four lines which made the repetition of a fixed melody

20 *Intende qui regis*: 52 against 12 cases; *Aeterne rerum*: 54 against 10 cases; *Deus creator*: 43 against 21 cases; *Iam surgit*: 58 against 6 cases; altogether: 207 against 49 cases.

21 *Intende qui regis*: verse 1: *qui regis*; verse 5: *thalamo*; *gemmae*.

22 West 1992a, 137 f.

23 West 1992a, 137.

24 Stäblein 1957, 995: „Sofort mit dem Auftreten gesungener lateinischer Hymnentexte sind zwei Merkmale, die bis heute Geltung behielten, gegeben: 1. Der Iso-Strophismus, d.h. alle Strophen sind gleich gebaut und können somit auf dieselbe Melodie gesungen werden . . . 2. Der Iso-Syllabismus, d.h. innerhalb der Strophen ist die Zahl der Silben fest oder fast fest gegeben.“

25 Heinze 1917, 8 f. (except IV 8); see IV 8 and Heinze on 17 und 34.

possible. Thus, he misused a Latin spoken metre for sung lyrics, following the classic models of the four-line-stanzas of aeolic lyric, the asclepiadeic, alcaic and sapphic strophes, which were familiar to every cultivated Roman in their transformation by Horace.

The next poet of Latin hymns after Ambrosius, Prudentius (died after 407) adopted the *Metrum Ambrosianum*, which spread quickly and became canonical. Two thirds of all transmitted texts of hymns are *Ambrosiani*.²⁶ The experiments of Prudentius with the fourth asclepiadeic or the sapphic strophe (*Cathemerinon* 5 and 8) were never repeated. Thus, the *Hymnus Ambrosianus*, having superseded all other attempts, eventually prefigured the conception of the hymnus of the Christian congregation.²⁷ Bruno Stäblein has brought together much more than a thousand texts of hymns in the *Metrum Ambrosianum*.²⁸ Four of these are attested for Ambrosius in quotations by Augustine, namely *Deus creator omnium*,²⁹ *Aeterne rerum conditor*,³⁰ *Iam surgit hora tertia*³¹ and *Intende qui regis Israel*, which is the first stanza of *Veni redemptor gentium*, widely known in Martin Luther's translation: *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*.³² The authorship of Ambrosius for fourteen further hymns is likely.³³

2 The Melodies

It is much more difficult to assess the authorship of Ambrosius for his melodies,³⁴ the manuscript transmission of which begins no earlier than 1000 AD. Evidently the transmission of Ambrosian melodies from 386³⁵ to 1000 AD was exclusively oral. This is puzzling, as the system of the Greek

26 Stäblein 1957, 996.

27 For extensive commentaries on *Deus creator omnium*, *Aeterne rerum conditor*, *Splendor paternae gloriae* and *Iam surgit hora tertia* see Franz 1994, on *Intende qui regis Israel*, *Inluminans altissimus* and *Hic est dies verus Dei* see Zerfass 2008.

28 Stäblein 1956, 663-679.

29 Confessiones 9,12.

30 Retract. 1,21.

31 De natura et gratia c. Pelagianos c. 63.

32 Sermo 372.

33 Schanz 1914, 231 f., Franz 1994, p. 17-25.

34 See Dreves 1893.

35 Ambrosian Hymns were sung in S. Ambrogio in Milan at 386, if not earlier (Schanz 1914, 229f.).

notation was known in Rome centuries earlier.³⁶ The last witness is the learned Boethius (480/85–524/26), who, following Gaudentius,³⁷ explains erroneously the invention of the notation by the *veteres* (παλαιοί) by their aim to replace the full names of strings of the monochord (*integra nomina*, ὀνόματα) by signs (*notulae*, σημεῖα) in order to save time and space (*propter compendium scriptiois*). But from his anxious assertion that composers sometimes added the *notulae* to their poems in order to preserve the melodies for posterity, it transpires that the use of the Greek notation in musical practice was no longer familiar to the readers of Boethius: *ita miro modo repperientes, ut non tantum carminum verba, quae litteris explicarentur, sed melos quoque ipsum, quod his notulis signaretur, in memoriam posteritatemque duraret*.³⁸ A century later the Greek notation was forgotten: Isidore of Seville (560–636) thinks that music is transmitted only by memory: *nisi enim ab homine memoria teneantur soni, pereunt, quia scribi non possunt* (*Origines* 3,15,2). Evidently the Greek notation ceased to be used by practising musicians by about the fourth century.³⁹

Investigation of the authorship of Ambrosian melodies finds some help in the age, the provenience and the affiliation of manuscripts. The oldest manuscript with readable musical notation is a hymnal in Kempten (before 1026 AD), which offers 16 melodies with neumes without lines and 22 melodies with alphabetic notation, of which 11 melodies have neumes without lines in addition.⁴⁰ Not the oldest, but the most important manuscript of hymns is no. 347 of the *Bibliotheca Trivulziana*, which contains the stock of Milanese hymnody in the 14th century with neumes on lines. From this hymnal Bruno Stäblein has singled out an oldest layer of melodies,⁴¹ namely melody 1 (*Aeterne rerum conditor*), 3 (*Splendor paternae gloriae*), 6 (*Iam surgit hora tertia*), 8 (*Deus creator omnium*) und 14 (*Intende qui regis Israel*). The texts of these Hymns (with the exception of no. 3) are attested for Ambrosius also.⁴² The bold numbers of melodies are the numbers of Stäblein's *Monumenta Monodica Medii Aevi* (1956).

36 See West 1992a, 272 f. The first witness is Varro (fr. 282 p. 305 Funaioli). Quintilian gives evidence for singing from scores (Inst. 1.12,14). *Tropica* (Tables of keys) are mentioned by Marius Victorinus (GLAT VI 183, 23).

37 Boethius, *De institutione musica* IV 3; 15 f., Gaudentius 20.

38 Boethius, *De institutione musica* IV 3, 309 Friedlein.

39 West 1992a, 273.

40 Stäblein 1956 VIII and 578 f.

41 Stäblein 1956, 503 f.

42 See above p. 109, nn. 29–32; p. 110, n. 41 f.

The problems of the transmission of the Ambrosian hymns can be easily demonstrated by melody 14. This melody is transmitted in the aforesaid version of Milan for the first stanza of *Intende qui regis Israel*. There follow the stanzas 1-7 of *Veni redemptor gentium*. The same version in a transposition from D to G, is transmitted in a Cistercian hymnal also.⁴³ Melody 14 is transmitted also in a hymnal of Nevers,⁴⁴ which nevertheless omits the first stanza, *Intende qui regis Israel*. Instead, after stanzas 1-7 of *Veni redemptor gentium*, there follows as an 8th stanza the doxology.⁴⁵

The version of *Veni redemptor* with doxology became canonical, whilst the original version of the beginning was forgotten. Bruno Stäblein communicates six further melodies for the later version of *Veni redemptor* with doxology.⁴⁶ Of these six the melody 503₁ from Klosterneuburg, and its predecessor, melody 503₂ from Einsiedeln, became the model for Martin Luther's *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*.⁴⁷ For text and melody of Ambrosius of *Veni redemptor* however the melody 14₁ of *Intende qui regis Israel* in the Hymnal of Milan remains the best witness. Therefore, we shall use it as an example for the problems of the evaluation of the melodies transmitted in manuscripts after 1000 AD.

By comparing the different realisations of the melody 14 in six manuscripts there appear some variants which are listed in Stäblein's *Kritischer Bericht*.⁴⁸ The melody is transmitted in the D-mode and the G-mode. A special problem consists in the distribution of the *melismata* in the manuscripts after 1000 AD (see fig. 1). Comparing the six realisations of the melody 14,⁴⁹ it appears that 1) the *melismata* in a given manuscript are not set in the same pattern in the

43 Melody 14₂: Cistercian Hymnal, Heiligenkreuz Stiftsbibliothek 20, 12th /13th century, Stäblein 1956, 30; 515. For the oldest source of melody 14 (not in Stäblein) see Zeffass 2008, p. 138-140.

44 Melodie 14₃: Hymnal of Nevers, Paris BN nouv. acquis.lat. 1236, 12th century, Stäblein 1956, 81; 540.

45 Gloria tibi, Domine,/Qui natus es de virgine,/ Cum Patre et Sancto Spiritu,/ In sempiterna saecula.

46 Melody 71₉, Hymnal of Gaeta, Rom, Bibl. Casanatense 1574, 12th century.; Melody 406, Hymnal of Worcester, Cath. Libr. F 160, 13th century.; Melody 503₁, Hymnal of Klosterneuburg, Stiftsbibliothek 1000, 1336 AD; Melody 503₂, Hymnal of Einsiedeln, Stiftsbibliothek 366, 12th century.; Melody 597, Hymnal of Dürnstein, St. Florian, Stiftsbibliothek x1 407, 15th century.; Melody 703, Hymnal of Verona, Bibl. Cap. CIX (102), 11th century.

47 Encheiridion geistlicher Gesänge, Erfurt 1524; Stäblein 1956, 568, Zeffass 2008 p. 139-147.

48 Stäblein 1956, 501-624, esp. 507.

49 Intende qui regis: Stäblein 1956, 8, 30, 81; Sic ter quaterni: Stäblein 1956, 188; A patre, unigenite: Stäblein 1956, 221; Ut nox tenebris: Stäblein 1956, 384.

Nr.1: Aeterne rerum conditor									
Syllable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	sum
Milan (14. AD)			1		1	3			5
Cistercian (13. AD)						3	3		6
Klosterneuburg (1336)							3		3
Verona (11. AD)					1	3	4		8
metre	x	-	υ	-	x	-	υ	-	
Nr. 3: Splendor paternae gloriae									
Syllable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	sum
Milan (14. AD)				1	1	1		1	4
Cistercian (13. AD)				1	1	1		2	5
Nevers (12. AD)								1	1
Klosterneuburg (1336)								1	1
Einsiedeln (12. AD)				2			1	1	4
Verona (11. AD)						1		1	2
Gaeta (12. AD)							1	1	2
metre	x	-	υ	-	x	-	υ	-	
Nr. 6: Iam surgit hora tertia									
Syllable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	sum
Milan (14. AD)		2			1		1	1	5
Cistercian (13. AD)		2					2	1	5
metre	x	-	υ	-	x	-	υ	-	
Nr. 8: Deus, creator omnium									
Syllable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	sum
Milan (14. AD)								1	1
Cistercian (13. AD)		1	1	1				1	4
Nevers (12. AD)								1	1
Worcester (13. AD)		1		3	2	1		1	8
Klosterneuburg (1336)				2	2	1		1	6
Verona (11. AD)				2		2	1	1	6
metre	x	-	υ	-	x	-	υ	-	
Nr. 14: Intende, qui regis Israel									
Syllable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	sum
Milan (14. AD)	2			1	1	2		1	7
Cistercian (13. AD)	1		1		1	2	2	1	8
Nevers (12. AD)	1				1	2		1	5
Worcester (13. AD)	1		2		1	2	2	1	9
Klosterneuburg (1336)	1		1		1	1	2	1	7
Verona (11. AD)	1	1				2	2	1	7
metre	x	-	υ	-	x	-	υ	-	

FIGURE 1 *Distribution of melismata on the eight syllables of the metrum Abrosianum.*

four lines of the stanza, but in different places in each of the four lines, 2) that in different manuscripts the *melismata* mostly are not set in the same pattern, and 3) that the *melismata* are set indiscriminately on each of the 8 syllables of the iambic dimeter, without any preponderance of the anceps syllables or the long syllables of the text. Comparing the use of *melismata* in the other hymns, of which text and melody are attested for Ambrosius also, namely nr. 1 (*Aeterne rerum conditor*), 3 (*Splendor paternae glorie*), 6 (*Iam surgit hora tertia*) and 8 (*Deus creator omnium*), there appears the same use of the *melismata* in the second dimeters, while the first dimeters tend to be plain syllabic melodies.

All in all, it appears that the *melismata* disagree with the metrics of the text. Therefore, they do not represent old tradition, but belong to different aequalistic realisations according to the predilections of the different monastic congregations, as represented in the respective manuscripts after 1000 AD.⁵⁰ When trying to reconstruct the original melodies of Ambrosius, the *melismata* have to be stripped off.

3 The Rhythm

In accordance with the *usus* of the manuscripts and the *usus* of the Roman church, Bruno Stäblein transcribes the melodies in the *Monumenta* in an aequalistic version. This means that every note has the same value.⁵¹



FIGURE 2 *Monumenta Monodica* 1.14.

⁵⁰ See Stäblein 1956, 503, 507, 514).

⁵¹ Stäblein 1959 XVI and n. 24.

We present therefore the melody nr. 14 (*Intende qui regis Israel*) first in Stäblein's aequalistic version with all *melismata*.

When the *melismata* are stripped off, there remain still several metrical anomalies, which accumulate in the first stanza, where Ambrosius transplants nearly word by word psalm 80, 2-3 in the version of the *vulgata* into iambic dimeters.⁵² This can be seen by comparing stanza 1 and 2:

1. *In – ten – de qui re-gis Is – ra – el,*
 2. *Ve – ni, re – demp – tor gen – ti – um,*
1. *su – per Che – ru – bim qui se – des,*
 2. *os – ten – de par – tum vir – gi – nis;*
1. *ap – pa-re ... E - phrem co-ram, ex – ci – ta*
 2. *mi – re-tur om – **ne** sae – cu – lum,*
1. ***po** – ten – ti – am **tu** – am et ve – ni.*
 2. *ta – lis de – cet par - tus de – um.*

FIGURE 3 Metrical peculiarities in Nr. 14 stanza 1 and 2.

We find *anceps* resolved into anapaest (*regis Israel*) and *scriptio plena* of short syllable (*appare Ephrem; coram, excita; tuam et*), which is to be replaced by elision. The following stanzas are flawless, except stanza 5 (anapaests at *thalamo; geminae*), where Ambrosius again paraphrases a psalm (19,6).⁵³ Use of previously coined material in quantitative poetry can easily raise metrical problems.

It is interesting also to see that Ambrosius is not intent on strict responsion of the metrics of the respective stanzas, but uses the licenses in the treatment of the *anceps* arbitrarily. Thus, we find opposed in the *anceps*-position *Intende / veni; super / ostende; coram / omne; potentiam / talis; tuam / partus* (short *anceps* in bold in Fig. 3). This means that the rhythmic shape of a quantitative realisation of the iambic dimeter would oscillate not only from *anceps* to *anceps*, but moreover from stanza to stanza. This vagueness is, as we have seen (see above p. 108), tolerable in spoken poetry, but not for the chanting of great congregations.

52 Psalm 80(79) 2-3 : *qui regis Israel intende / ... qui sedes super cherubin manifestare / coram Effraim ... / excita potentiam tuam.*

53 Psalm 19(18) 6: *procedens de thalamo suo / exultavit ut gigans.*

When comparing stanza 1 and 2 of nr. 14, it appears, finally, that Ambrosius did not try to reconcile the word accent with a possible ictus of the verse. As a trivial consequence of the laws of the Latin word accent there is perfect coincidence when the line is divided into a trisyllable, a disyllable and a trisyllable. If not, ictus and word accent disagree. This demonstrates that Ambrosius wanted to write quantitative lyrics, falling back on a model of the Roman classic, the 'Strophic Form' with which he was familiar from Horace. By inventing melodies which were repeated for every strophe and might be transferred to other texts also Ambrosius made it easy to learn his hymns by heart.

Already before 386 Ambrosius had introduced his hymns into the liturgy in Milan.⁵⁴ They were learned and sung by great multitudes, the *populus*, as Ambrosius himself attests.⁵⁵ When Iustina, the mother of the emperor Valentinian, took sides in 386 with the Arians against Ambrosius, the bishop together with the Athanasians occupied the basilica, where the congregation held out singing day and night the hymns of Ambrosius, as Augustine attests.⁵⁶ There are no clues to the origin of the melodies of the *Hymni Ambrosiani*. Augustine attests only that the *usus* of singing psalms and hymns in Milan before 387 followed the example of the Greek East of the Roman empire.⁵⁷ The melodies were evidently an invention of Ambrosius himself. But in what way were his hymns sung?

For sung *Hymni Ambrosiani* Bruno Stäblein does not claim an aequalistic realisation as the only possibility. He also recommends singing in a 4/4-measure with eight syllables of equal length, or in a 3/4-measure.⁵⁸ As 80% of the *incipitia* are long (see above p. 107 f.), the first proposal would lead to clashes of metrics and rhythm of 20% in the case of the *incipitia*, and 100% in the case of the short syllables of the text. The second proposal would produce clashes of metrics and rhythm of 80% only in the case of the *incipitia*, which is less disturbing. But did the congregations of Ambrosius still preserve a natural feeling of the quantities of the spoken Latin?

54 Paulinus *vita Ambrosii* 13 *hoc in tempore* (Easter 386) *primum antiphonae, hymni ac vigiliae in ecclesia Mediolanensi celebrari coeperunt*. See Leonhard 2014.

55 Ambrosius, *Sermo contra Auxentium* (386 AD) 34: *Hymnorum quoque meorum carminibus deceptum populum ferunt. Plane nec hoc abnuo... Quid enim potentius quam confessio trinitatis, quae cotidie totius populi ore celebratur? Certatim omnes student fidem fateri; Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum norunt versibus praedicare*.

56 Augustine, *Confessiones* 9,7 (25th April 387): *excubabat pia plebs in ecclesia mori parata cum episcopo suo... tunc hymni et psalmi ut canerentur secundum morem orientalium partium, ne populus maeroris taedio contabesceret, institutum est. ex illo in hodiernum retentum multis iam ac paene omnibus gregibus tuis et per cetera orbis imitantibus*.

57 See n. 53.

58 Stäblein 1956, xvi and n. 24.

Paul Klopsch has pointed to the known fact that Latin (like Greek) underwent from the 1st to the 4th century AD a shift from a language with natural quantities of syllables and musical accent to a language with stress accent at the expense of the quantities of syllables.⁵⁹ In the 4th century the educated classes could internalize the model of the classical quantitative Roman poetry by extensive reading. But the *populus* no longer had any feeling for the quantities of Latin. Augustine, in his *De Musica* (III 3,5), which was begun after 387 in Milan, gives a lively picture of this situation: A pupil declares that he has no idea of long and short syllables, a difference which only grammarians preserve (*syllabarum longarum et brevium cognitionem me non habere, quod a grammaticis traditur*). He does not deny that he can hear rhythmical patterns, but does not know which syllable must be lengthened or shortened, which can only be gathered from examples (*iudicium aurium ad temporum momenta moderanda me posse habere non nego; quae vero syllaba producenda vel corripienda sit, quod in auctoritate situm est, omnino nescio*).⁶⁰ Indeed many grammatical treatises give examples and rules for the quantities of Latin words in poetry, the first of which is Servius (4th century AD).⁶¹

Like the pupil of Augustine, the congregations of Ambrosius evidently had no sense of the natural quantities of Latin. Therefore we might choose a realisation of the five genuine Ambrosian melodies (nr. 1, 3, 6, 8, 14) in 3/4 measure without any *melismata* (see **Appendix**), thus saving the iambic character of the hymnus which Ambrosius evidently intended. Of course this holds good also for the other presumable Ambrosian hymns and melodies, which are a new start from Roman roots, superseding all other attempts by its simplicity and coining the conception of the hymnus of the Western Christian congregation for the centuries to come.

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59 Klopsch 1972, 1-3.

60 Klopsch 1972, 4.

61 Klopsch 1972, 61-63.

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Appendix

Five Ambrosian hymns without *melismata* in a iambic version.

Monumenta Monodica I 1

The musical score consists of four staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 8/8, indicated by a '8' below the first staff. The melody is written in a simple, iambic style. The lyrics are in Latin and are aligned with the notes on the staves.

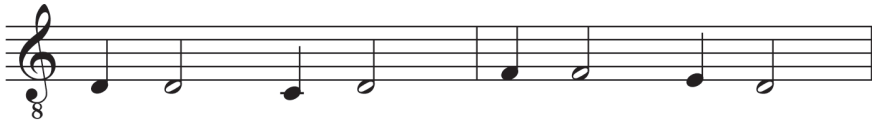
Ae - ter - ne re - rum con - di - tor,

no - ctem di - em - que qui re - gis,

et tem - po - rum das tem - po - ra,

ut al - le - ves fa - sti - di - um.

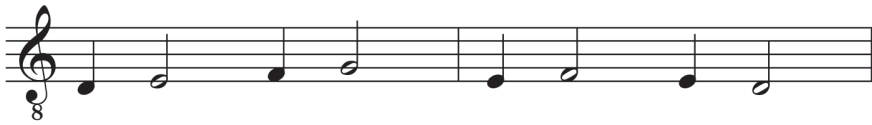
Monumenta Monodica I 3



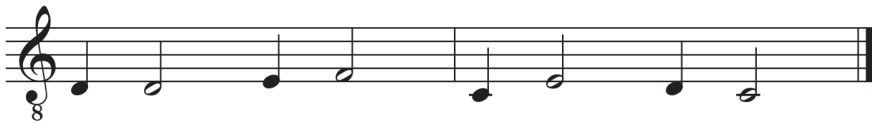
Splen - dor pa - ter - nae glo - ri - ae



de lu - ce lu - cem pro - fe - rens



lux lu - cis et fons lu - mi - nis

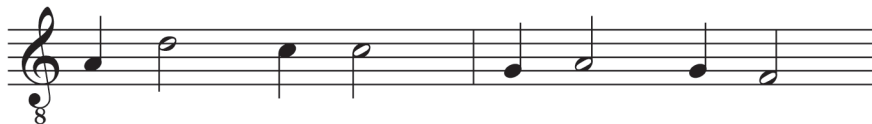


di - em di - es il - lu - mi - nans.

Monumenta Monodica I 6



Iam sur - git ho - ra ter - ti - a



qua Chri - stus a - scen - dit cru - cem.

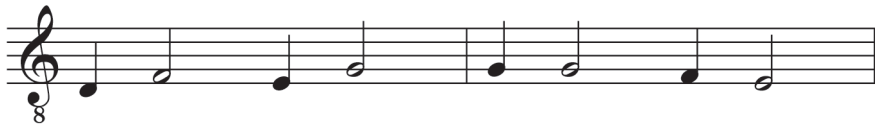


Nil in - so - lens mens co - gi - tet,



in - ten - dat af - fe - ctum pre - cis.

Monumenta Monodica I 8



De - us cre - a - tor om - ni - um



po - li - que re - ctor, ve - sti - ens



di - em - de - co - ro lu - mi - ne,



no - ctem so - po - ris gra - ti - a.

Monumenta Monodica I 14



In - ten - de qui re - gis Is - ra - el,
Ve - ni, re - demp - tor — gen - ti - um,



su - per Che - ru - bim qui se - des,
os - ten - de par - tum vir - gi - nis.



ap - pa - reE - phrem co - ram, ex - ci - ta
Mi - re - tur om - ne sae - cu - lum,



po - ten - ti - am tu - amet ve - ni.
ta - lis de - cet par - tus de - um.

Book Review



Leedy, D.

Singing Ancient Greek: A Guide to Musical Reconstruction and Performance, eScholarship, University of California, 2014, 281 pp. Downloadable for free (<http://escholarship.org/uc/item/1rj4j3n1>)

How was ancient Greek poetry sung in practice? The music of song that emerges from the tiny remnants of notated documents represents only the visible tip of the proverbial iceberg. The likely contours, if not the precise details, of the submerged bulk can potentially be traced by combining metrical knowledge of poetic texts, evidence of melodic structures as expounded in technical and theoretical sources, and reasonable reconstructions of instrumental resources such as lyres, kitharas, and auloi. Given the ubiquity of music in the ancient Greek world, and the evident potential for it to affect the impact of songs that today survive almost entirely as words without music, bringing together such disparate sources of evidence to create practical realisations of sung music has long presented a goal and a challenge to musicologists, musically-minded classicists, and enthusiasts of ancient Greek culture.

Douglas Leedy has risen to the challenge in this bold and valuable handbook, which deserves to be widely read, pondered, and used as intended to guide practice in the performing of ancient texts. The text is presented as a typescript for free download, rather than a formally published and fully polished monograph. Thus, nearly all the Greek script and musically-notated excerpts appear in Leedy's clear, neat hand rather than in print; and in many places the staff notation illustrating the melodies of Greek texts gives way to melodic indications using modern pitch-letters placed above the syllables of words (similar to the way ancient melodies were notated). Clearly these aspects of presentation would have been upgraded and standardised in a finished publication. While the frontispiece states that 'the Department of Classics [at Berkeley, University of California] is pleased to host this suggestive work by a UC Berkeley alumnus',

lack of official publication should not be imputed to the work's alleged 'suggestiveness' nor to any presumed scholarly deficit. To complete the task as it was obviously intended would have been a time-consuming matter, so we may be grateful that the author, an American composer, musicologist, and conductor who died aged 77 in March 2015, was prepared to disseminate the book in its current form.

Despite not being a professional classicist, Leedy's knowledge of the ancient Greek sources is thorough and accurate, his handling of the evidence authoritative, and his use of Greek faultless. Building on the pioneering work of experts in ancient Greek music (including Winnington-Ingram, Pearson, Anderson, Wählstrom, West, Barker, and Danek and Hagel), he sets out to provide practical principles—and in many cases, illustrative musical scores—for singing ancient Greek texts ranging from Homeric epic through to elegy, iambus, and the full gamut of lyric poetry. In order to offer a properly comprehensive guide to singing, he is obliged to go into detail about the numerous metres that one encounters en route. It is regrettable, if understandable, that the metrical systems must be presented using the (to many) over-complicated ancient terminology, which may have the effect of preventing some readers from engaging as desired with the heard rhythms of the poetry. But the scope of Leedy's task is considerable, and the issues complex, and he has presented the material in a commendably accessible manner with no sacrifice of scholarly rigour. As a result, while the detail of his practical musical reconstructions remains speculative, we may be confident that the melodic proposals for which he argues are based on accurate citations and sound interpretations of the source material.

The crucial basis for Leedy's project is that applied by Martin West in his well-known 1981 article on the singing of Homer, the premise that melodisation was from the earliest times based on the natural word-pitch of Greek. On this rides the further assumption that word-pitch in the archaic and classical periods is accurately reflected by the accent marks introduced in Hellenistic times. While neither position is incontrovertible and both undoubtedly lack adequate nuance, they are sufficiently probable to justify Leedy's proceeding to make detailed proposals based on the texts of ancient poetry. The value of his proposals is that, even if one is inclined to alter specific elements (the working-out of melody for Homeric epic is, for instance, rather different from that of Danek and Hagel), they produce unequivocal practical realisations for a wide range of ancient song. These realisations demonstrate, among other things, that the melodisation of strophic song can be consistent with a reasonable degree of conformity to pitch accent. It would have helped Leedy's insistence (pace Martin West) on this sensible viewpoint to emphasise the prioritisation of *harmonia* over *melos* in Greek musical theory and practice. If the

aural basis of a song is a fixed set of notes such as that used for the tuning of a lyre, the precise ordering of these notes into a melodic line will be of less concern for the song's identity than the repeated use of the same set of notes from stanza to stanza.

While it would be misleading to view Leedy's resulting written realisations of the melodies of Greek poetry as scores, the proposed melodisations may be usefully played, sung, heard, evaluated, pondered—and, of course, held up to critique. Leedy recognises that what he offers can only be 'clues' to the sounds of classical antiquity. He writes: 'our reimaginings of the music of antiquity are always provisional; we are always ready to try out a better idea, to find a truer musical expression of a composition' (11). This formulation betrays a tendency to privilege the way the music 'worked', when it is arguably no less important to think about how the music was heard. Thus it may be the case that 'the Greeks nurtured one of the great musical cultures of the world' (6), but that does not mean that all their musical expressions counted as 'great music' (as Aristophanes among others makes clear); while the cultural and musical abyss between the Greeks and us is such that we could not expect to recognise what would have been heard as right and beautiful to a Greek ear. Leedy says next to nothing about ethnomusicological parallels, which indicate that in an oral culture one should not expect, for instance, there to be any fixity of melody (or even text) across performances, that a profusion of styles and registers can coexist which operate in very different ways, and that the ideals of sound and expression in developed Western classical music cannot be readily mapped onto other traditions.

Nor, surprisingly, does Leedy subject any of the actual notated fragments of ancient melody to detailed analysis. This could have drawn his attention to expressive principles that bid to override conformity to pitch-accent (even if that principle was present). Such expressiveness is evident in the fragment of Euripides' *Orestes*, which Leedy classifies as outside his frame of reference in that it is an example of the New Music. Of that style he writes (3-4): 'music that had been straightforwardly built on the rhythms of the long and short syllables of the words acquired new rhythmic freedoms, and new melodic independence superseded what seems to have been a quite strict melodic limitation to the tonal shapes of the words, given by the written accents . . . We can hardly begin to imagine its nature and sound, and are forced to conclude that, absent the revelation of substantial new material its reconstruction is beyond our reach'. A sensitive listener such as Leedy could undoubtedly have elicited something of the expressive musical idiom of the *Orestes* papyrus; but he can be forgiven for choosing to limit his purview to the texts that seemed to offer providential scope for melodic reconstruction on the principle of word-pitch.

For providing musicians and classicists with such a comprehensive, exhilarating, and well-developed elaboration of that principle, Douglas Leedy deserves our thanks and commendation.

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